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*Edited by*  
**Bhabes Chandra Roy**  
**Nirmal Kumar Bose**

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## SOME OBSERVATIONS ON NOMADIC CASTES OF INDIA\*

By NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

IT is quite often stated that the villages of India were more or less self-sufficient in former times. While it cannot be denied that production was often for meeting local or even domestic needs, the fact should not be overlooked that the villages of India were of many kinds even from fairly early times. Thus in the time of the Buddha, we hear of villages which could only be termed industrial villages inhabited by artisans of a particular kind.

After the commercialization of Indian agriculture during the past century and the decay of some of the rural arts and crafts, a change has come about in the population and occupational structure of village India. Yet we can discern several functional types of villages which are not of recent origin but have continued to be what they are from a distant past. Potters' villages situated at points where suitable raw material is easily obtained, or trading villages situated at river-side ports from where roads radiate into the hinterland can be of fairly early origin. Some of these trading establishments again have succeeded, even from the distant past, in attracting

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\* Based upon a speech at the International Geographical Seminar held in the Aligarh Muslim University from the 9th to the 16th of January 1956.

groups of craftsmen like weavers or blacksmiths producing special goods, and have thus been converted from merely trading to trading and manufacturing villages.

Besides this complementary function of some kinds of villages, rural India built up another arrangement by means of which the farmer succeeded in making purchases which he had not to make at frequent intervals. Weekly fairs were supplemented by seasonal fairs of a religious kind, when the farmer not only earned merit by taking a bath in some holy stream, but also made important purchases like that of horses, camels or cattle, or of wooden doors or timber for building his house, or of boats, and even grain, according to the fair which he attended. These fairs, which are like temporary towns, are therefore another avenue of exchange normally functioning in India.

Just as a complementary relationship can be thus ascribed to various types of settlements in rural India, a similar arrangement can also be attributed to the 'social units functioning' in the same place. Most of the castes who inhabit village India have certain occupations assigned to them by tradition. A blacksmith's son is supposed to follow the calling of his father ; but if he does not succeed in earning his livelihood in that manner, he may take to a new one, although he continues to hold that smithery remains his traditional hereditary occupation.

Caste undoubtedly divided the people of India into endogamous social groups, some of which were high and others low, while some enjoyed privileges of education and were given a high status in society, while others were denied the same, sometimes to the extent of being suppressed into the position of untouchables. In spite of this stratification, there was a second element in caste which bound together the various elements by a bond of interdependence. A leather worker or a carpenter in a village knew that he could rest assured that he and his children after him would enjoy the traditional payment made to his caste generation after generation by his neighbours in the village ; and if anybody tried to encroach upon his monopoly, the village panchayat would unitedly exercise

their authority and prevent such a thing from taking place, so long as it had the power to do so. And it was this guarantee of economic security attained through a traditional pattern of mutual aid which gave a strength to caste even while there were revolts against it from time to time on account of its social inequality and the attendant suppression of the 'low' by the 'high' castes.

It is our purpose now to show how some of the castes within the Hindu social structure have become wandering in their habits. In north Gujarat and the neighbouring areas of Saurashtra and even Rajasthan, the Gariya Lohar blacksmith roams from one village to another with the paraphernalia of his trade, as well as his family and children. He encamps in one village for a period of a week or more, only to leave it when no further work is available. In West Bengal, in the district of Birbhum, one may come across roving groups of brass workers who originally came from Orissa and still continue to practise the lost-wax process of casting brass grain-measures or toys in the shape of horses and elephants with riders, money-boxes of various designs, and so on. The Lambadi or Banjara caste of north Gujarat and of many parts of middle India, are a labouring caste who settle down in one place for as long as work is available there. Their women's dress is picturesque and very colourful, while their ornaments show an extravagance of taste which is incommensurate with their economic position. The Madari or juggler of north India is also a roving artisan who goes about from place to place entertaining people either with his own skill or with the tricks played by the monkey, goat or bear with which he is accompanied.

None of these above-mentioned castes can find permanent patronage in one single village, and they have therefore become converted into wandering groups, forming a complement to the settled residents who inhabit the villages of India.

It is interesting that some of these wandering groups originally came from ethnic groups speaking a language of their own, and who had originally no relationship (even economic) with the settled inhabitants of the agricultural villages. Thus,

the Birhor (literally, 'men of the forest') of southern Bihar and northern Orissa have now practically become an appendage of the rural economic system of the caste villages. From an enquiry into their past history, it appears that some, at least, among them practised a more a less inefficient form of cultivation. But as the land passed more and more into the hands of the landowners, some groups among them took to a specialized form of occupation, which was complementary to the occupational structure of the villages. The Birhors of Hazaribagh, Singhbhum and Mayurbhanj have, for instance, taken to the art of manufacturing ropes from the fibre of the *Bauhinia*, and they exchange them either for cash or more frequently for paddy with the farmers living in the neighbourhood. They also kill small game, like partridges, peafowl or rabbits by means of their nets and clubs and sell them for cash. And for this purpose they live in small temporary settlements of their own in the fringe of jungles, not very far from farming villages. They avoid the depth of the forests, for then they would lose contact with their clients.

It is interesting that although the Birhors live surrounded by people having houses of earthen walls and thatches made of wooden frames covered over by either earthen tiles or grass, they continue to build their shelters with poles cut from trees covered over completely by twigs with leaves until the houses become waterproof even in the heavy showers of Ranchi or Hazaribagh. The Birhor hut is circular in ground plan, rarely apsidal, and it has a conical roof.

It is interesting that the Sabakhia, pig-rearers of Puri district in Orissa, have hemispherical (not conical) huts made of boughs of trees thatched over with palmyra leaves, although the latter may not be as common as in the area from where they originally came. The Sabakhia of Puri often speaks in his mother tongue, Telugu, although he might have been living within a wholly Oriya-speaking population for more than fifty years. The Birhor is migratory and one can understand how he finds it easier to build up his conical hut which has no separate walls. But it is difficult to say why the Sabakhia of Puri continues to build his house like a hemisphere, although he

may remain tied to one spot for more than fifty years, while all the other castes with whom he has dealings build their permanent dwellings in a completely different manner.

While on the subject of round hunts, it may be pointed out that many of the apparently lowly castes of Andhra near Waltair, and some distance inland along the river valleys, have houses which are circular in plan and have conical roofs. The walls are of mud or wattle. Some of these houses again are nearly square in plan, even while they have a steeply cone-shaped roof which ends in a sharp point.

Incidentally, again, three of the Hindu castes of north Gujarat, namely Rewari, Mer and Wagher or Waghri, have a kind of domestic architecture which is distinct from the common rectangular houses which belong to most of the peoples of this part of the country. Some Mers or Rewaris build houses which are indistinguishable from that of others; but quite a few have completely circular huts having mud walls, but surmounted by a pointed, conical thatched roof. And it is interesting that no castes other than the three named above, seem to have this kind of domestic style of building.

It is even more interesting that although the Rewari and Mer frequently practise farming, cattle keeping or the rearing of goats and sheep seems to be their traditional occupation. The Waghri are a comparatively different caste who live by selling labour or by supplying twigs every morning to people who brush their teeth with them. They have also earned a notoriety for addiction to theft.

In any case, the point we are trying to make out is that, along with the castes who practise settled forms of life in rural India, there are quite a few who form their complement and who have a more or less nomadic form of existence. This nomadism is unlike the nomadism of pastoral people in so far as the dependence is not so much on animals as in the latter case, and the movements are guided by the needs of trade rather than by the needs of food of the animals reared.

A question may be asked as to whether this can be called nomadism at all or not. Perhaps it should, in view of the fact

that the castes who roam about have no permanent home, and roam in small family groups. In the case of the Birhors, again, their roving life seems to have been the result of the impact of a more powerful group of peasants and artisans who gradually drove them into an extremely specialized dependence on the jungle when they began to produce commodities for exchange instead of goods for personal use.

We have also seen how some of these groups may be ethnically distinct in origin, and how some of them have succeeded in retaining elements of an earlier culture even when they are surrounded by others having separate, and may be, more efficient forms of culture traits. Conservatism, under these circumstances, is a quality relied upon to register the individuality of an ethnic group even when they are swallowed up by the economic system of the majority.

# A BRAHMIN VILLAGE OF THE SASANA TYPE IN THE DISTRICT OF PURI, ORISSA

By AJIT RAY

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**B**IRA-NARASINGHAPUR, a Brahmin village studied in November 1955, lies seven miles north-west of Puri town and about two miles west of Jankadeipur railway station. The village is about one and a half miles from an all-weather road and a bus service connects it with Puri and Cuttack, seven miles and fifty miles distant respectively. The river Bhargavi flows to the south of the village and eventually drains into the Chilka Lake.

The soil of the village is well suited for the cultivation of paddy; the high lands grow *biali* or autumn rice, the marshy lands are good for *sarad* or winter rice, the lowlands are suited for *dalua* or spring rice. In Bira-Narasinghapur the principal crops in order of importance are: (1) rice (winter, autumn and spring); (2) cereals and pulses (*Biri*, *Mandia*, *Kulthi*, *Mung*, *Arhar*, etc.); (3) oil seeds and fibres; (4) coco-nuts; (5) *pan* (betel leaves); (6) other crops and vegetables. The main sources of irrigation are the rivers, channels, tanks and wells. The village is full of coco-nut trees.

## *Historical background*

We learn from historical records that the Brahmins of *sasana* villages in Puri District, the sacred land of Lord Jagannath, were induced to come here from Jajpur, the city on the Vaitarani river, by the rajas of Puri. Those who settled in Puri belong to the *Dakshinatya Sreni* or southern class, and those who remained in Jajpur form the *Uttara Sreni* or northern



class. Earlier, these Brahmins are said to have migrated from Kanauj and are therefore also known as Kanaujia Brahmins.

The system of establishing Brahmin sasana villages first came into being during the reign of Gôvinda Vidyadhara (1541—48 A.D.) who founded the village of Bira-Govindapur. There are altogether sixteen sasana villages founded by different rajas during their reigns. The Brahmins of these villages have the privilege of sitting in the *Mukti Mandapa* hall in the southern portion of the Jagannath temple in Puri where they function as a theocratic legislative council. In the *Mukti Mandapa* there are sixteen pillars which represent the sixteen sasana villages. Thirty-two smaller villages other than these, were also founded by the queens or other officials of the rajas in the same district, these being known as *karabara*. The latter are near the sasana villages.

Originally, it is believed, there was no social gradation among the Brahmins of sasana villages, all being considered to be of equal rank. The last independent king, Mukundadeva, who founded the village of Danda-Mukundapur, introduced to some extent this kind of social differentiation. At a later period, Narasinghadeva founded the village studied, namely Bira-Narasinghapur, as a special gift to the preceptors or *Rajgurus* or *Samantas*, as they were the repositories of learning and masters of astronomy, astrology and magic.

The Brahmins of Bira-Narasinghapur also say that King Narasinghadeva made a permanent rent-free gift of 6,250 acres, known as *Chakradan*, to the chief priest or Samanta or Rajguru. This Brahmin village was established with 128 equal divisions, and each family was given a plot of homestead land measuring five *bakharas*, fifty feet in breadth, and twelve and half *manas* or 3 acres in area. In addition, each family was given seventeen and a half acres of cultivable land. The remainder was reserved for the maintenance of village servants or *Sevakas* and the general use of the village.

### *Village structure and population of different castes*

The village of Bira-Narasinghapur is inhabited by seventeen different castes which are distributed in different settle-

ments in a manner which symbolizes their caste unity and also their relative status in the village as a whole. The Brahmin settlement is located at the centre and the houses are in two rows. One is on the southern and the other on the northern side of the road which runs from east to west. The Brahmin settlement is divided into two portions, the western one being known as *prathama khandi*, first part, and the eastern one as *ditiya khandi*, second part. Among the other caste groups, the servants or *sevakas*, formed by a number of different castes, are located near the vicinity of the two main temples, at the two extremities of the Brahmin settlement, one in the west and the other in the east. The lowly Bauri caste and the hinduized Sahara tribe live side by side in separate settlements about a furlong away from the northern end of the Brahmin settlement. Nine, five and three families of Teli (oilman), Barika (barber), and Gudia (confectioner) castes have purchased land from the Brahmins and they are settled within the Brahmin area. Each of the largest three castes, namely, Brahmin, Bauri and Chasa of Bira-Narasinghapur has a population of more than one hundred persons and these three number 1,394 out of the total village population. Brahmins, Bauris and Chasas are 54.7%, 1.6% and 1% respectively of the total population. All other castes are much smaller and less than one hundred in number. A list of the castes of Bira-Narasinghapur arranged in order of numerical strength is given in Table 1. The village census also revealed the fact that one-third of the total Brahmin population have left the village for different places for purposes of service. Most of them are however temporary emigrants and come home during festive occasions.

TABLE 1

<i>Caste</i>	<i>Traditional occupation</i>	<i>Number of families</i>	<i>Total population</i>	<i>Average members per family</i>
Brahmin	Scholars	175	928	5.3
Chasa	Cultivator	35	173	4.9
Bauri	Labourer	64	291	4.5
Barika	Barber	5	21	4.2
Malī	Gardener	6	24	4.0
Pujari	Priest	11	57	5.1
Kahalia	Trumpeter	5	22	4.4
Jyotisha	Astrologer	3	20	6.6
Teli	Oilman	9	33	3.6
Dhoba	Washerman	8	31	3.8
Chamar	Leather worker	9	26	2.8
Keuta	Fisherman	3	14	4.6
Dom	Drummer	2	15	7.5
Gudia	Confectioner	3	11	3.6
Gauda	Cowherd	3	9	3.0
Barhei	Carpenter	2	37	18.5
Sahara	Labourer	15	69	4.6

TABLE 2

*Distribution of sex-ratio in Brahmin caste*

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Proportion of Male : Female</i>
0-5	104	53	51	103.9 : 100
6-15	234	125	109	114.6 : 100
16-50	489	259	230	112.6 : 100
51-more	101	56	45	124.4 : 100
Total	928	493	435	113 : 100

Table 2 shows a preponderance of male children in the Brahmin caste in all the age groups.

TABLE 3

*Distribution of family types in Brahmin caste*

<i>Type of family</i>	<i>Number of families</i>	<i>Total population</i>	<i>Average family size</i>
Extended	45	408	9.0
Simple	66	276	4.1
Intermediate	44	233	5.2
Independent	11	11	1.0

Table 3 shows family types among the Brahmins in Bira-Narasinghapur village with their respective total population and average family size. The number of Simple families is found to be highest, with an average size of 4.1. The Extended and Intermediate types do not vary much in number, whereas the Independent type is lowest.

### *Occupational mobility in Brahmin caste*

The Brahmins of Bira-Narasinghapur were traditionally engaged in the study and teaching of the scriptures and worked as priests of the rajas of Puri. They were also skilled in astronomy, astrology and magic, which won for them respect and influence among other castes. Moreover, they gained the affection and confidence of the rulers and were raised to positions of importance in the courts. Many families also engaged in money-lending or agriculture through servants. But today the situation is different. In Table 4, the numbers of Brahmins engaged in various occupations are compared with one another. Among several occupations, the percentage under clerical service is highest and money-lending, one of the older occupations, is lowest. The percentage under agricultural and teaching occupations are the same. Brahmins do not cultivate their lands themselves, a Brahmin considers the Chasa caste as indispensable to agriculture. The Chasa caste forms an intermediate class between the landlord and landless workers. There are two individuals in the Brahmin caste who get their livelihood by means of day labour, but they serve only in other Brahmin families.

TABLE 4

*Distribution of occupation in the Brahmin caste*

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Teaching	50	18·4
Business	35	12·9
Agriculture	50	18·4
Money-lending	11	4·05
Technical job	31	11·4
Clerical job	94	34·6

*Traditional political institution •*

The most important institution of the village is formed by the Brahmin elders and commonly called the *Mahajan Mela*. Most of the work of common interest in the village is done by joint effort under the direction of the Mahajan Mela. Before a meeting is held, the Mali (gardener) rings a bell along the main street in the Brahmin quarter announcing the coming session of the Mela to all the members of Brahmin settlement. The members of the Mahajan Mela meet as a panchayat to discuss matters of interest to their own caste or to the village, and also to arbitrate in disputes of various kinds that might arise among themselves or elsewhere in the village. Formerly, the decision of the Mela was not subject to appeal before any higher authority. But today the Mela has lost some of its influence. The young Brahmins of the village do not hesitate to attend and even oppose the decision of the elders in the Mahajan Mela. When people are moreover dissatisfied with the decision of the Mahajan Mela, they file an appeal at the District Judge's Court in Puri. The authority of the Mahajan Mela seems thus to have been reduced considerably. Last year the people of the village welcomed the new panchayat system of the State Government intended to introduce local self-government. The new village panchayat is composed of representatives from all the important castes. Today, the Mahajan Mela and the panchayat are not functioning in an orderly way. The village panchayat implements all their conventions and rules in consultation with the Mahajan Mela.

The traditional system still dominates over the Brahmin caste at least.

### *Sevakas and their service*

The *Sevakas* or servants comprise a number of different castes who have functions intimately connected with the temple and also with some of the domestic and religious observances of the Brahmins. There are two main temples at two extremities of the settlement and the *sevakas* live close to the temples. The idols of Nilakantha and Lokanatha are worshipped at the eastern and western temples respectively. They are made of stone, while their surrogates, which have to be carried in procession along the road during festivals, are of metal. In addition to the daily duties, the *sevakas* perform assigned duties during great religious festivals.

The *sevakas* are paid for their service in the form of land, but the enjoyment of the land is conditional upon the performance of their respective duties in the temple and the village. The service-tenure land of the *sevakas* has become divided, as if it were joint family property. The barber and washerman have divided the total number of Brahmin families between themselves. Table 5 shows the quantity of service-tenure land given to different *sevakas*. The *sevakas* are subject to the authority of the Mahajan Mela. The lands allocated to them are from the village's communal property or *Kotha Sampatti* which belongs to the Brahmins as a whole. The Brahmin *sevaka* or *Pujari*, Mali (gardener), Kahalia (trumpeter), Dom (drummer) and Nahaka (astrologer) are the main temple servants; while the Barika (barber) Dhoba (washerman) are village servants. Gudia (confectioner) and Keuta (boatman and fisherman) castes are not counted as *sevakas*, but they are paid for their service in land.

TABLE 5

*Service tenure land given to the sevakas*

<i>Sevaka</i>	<i>Number of families</i>	<i>Quantity of land per family in acres</i>
Brahmin sevaka		
(a) (Panda)	3	2.0
(b) (Dikhit)	2	1.25
Mali	5	1.50
Barika	5	5.0
Dhoba	8	5.0
Dom	2	0.05
Kahilia	1	3.0
Nahaka	1	2.0
Keuta	4	1.25
Gudia	2	2.0

**Barika :** The barber families serve the Brahmins of Bira-Narasinghapur village. Each family is given 5.0 acres of rent-free land as remuneration for services. Shaving and the paring of nails are important parts of many Brahminical ceremonies. The formal communication of domestic occurrences and accompanying with a torch during religious processions are the duties which make a barber a much-esteemed member of the village community.

**Nahaka :** The importance of the horoscope and of fixing a lucky day and hour for every important undertaking is very great among the Brahmins. The Nahaka or astrologer is remunerated with 2.0 acres of land for the casting of the one and the ascertainment of the other.

**Dhoba :** Eight families of washermen serve the Brahmins. Each family is given 5.0 acres of service-tenure land. They not only wash clothing but also supply fuel during festive occasions to their allotted families.

**Dom :** Two Dom families serve the Barhmins. They beat drums on religious occasions and also domestic festivals in Brahmin families. They are supposed to supply all the baskets required for religious functions. Each Dom family is given 0.05 acres of land.

**Kahilia :** This caste plays the *kahali* or trumpet daily in the temple when worship is offered. They play the flute three times a day at the time of worship.

**Mali :** Mali is one of the castes which are tied to the temple for purposes other than that of actual worship. They bathe the images, deck them with flowers and keep the precincts clean. They have more secular avocations, generally connected with leaves or flowers, such as umbrella making, the preparation of leaf-platters for Brahminical feasts and garlands for ceremonial use. Five Mali families serve the village temple. Each family is given 1.53 acres of land.

**Brahmin sevaka :** Five Brahmin sevaka families serve the village temple as priests. The idols are bathed by them, then dressed and decorated with sandal paste on their forehead. The offerings are also prepared by these sevakas.

The Gudia, Kenta castes are not looked upon as sevakas. But they also have been given service-tenure land. They supply *chura* (chapped rice), *muri* (puffed rice), *ukhuda* (puffed rice sweetened with coarse sugar) and also various kinds of sweetmeats to the temple for purposes of offering.



# STORY OF A VILLAGE FACTION IN ORISSA

By NITYANANDA PATNAIK

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## *The village*

THE village of Barangpali is situated one mile east of Barpali in Orissa. A village worker attached to the American Friends Service Committee is posted in this village. The A. F. S. C. has been carrying out a programme of village uplift by the stimulation of local initiative and effort. Several months of work at Barangpali did not however produce anticipated results. So there was a proposal at the fortnightly meeting of the village workers at the centre in Barpali to give up work in the un-receptive village. It was however decided to try and find out the reason why the village was un-receptive or hostile before taking the final step.

The village of Barangpali has grown in population during the last fifty years. Some of the inhabitants have left the congested parent village and settled down in three small hamlets in the neighbouring fields. There are altogether 265 houses with a population of 1,260 souls.

## *The faction*

It was discovered in course of a fortnight's stay in the village that there was a strong faction which stood in the way of the development of any co-operative effort. It is therefore necessary to enter into its history in some detail. It is interesting to observe that the competition for power, which inhibited all efforts for self-improvement in the past among the villagers, arose not out of caste or class conflict but out of the clash of personalities competing for leadership and power.

Three of the villagers corroborated the following account. The Gauntia or headman of the village and his uncle, who is

his father's elder brother, started a grocery shop together. Sugar, kerosene and cloth were under governmental control. And through the patronage of the Government, the small shop made quite a fortune during the war and after. The headman looked after the shop while his uncle and the latter's son kept accounts. It is reported that eventually a quarrel arose over the accounts. The shop was closed down, the partners fell out, and the whole village sided with either the uncle or the headman in the cold war which ensued.

The war dragged on and became almost a totalitarian war. The stone-cutters of the village once sided with the uncle. Therefore, during an annual auction, the nephew or headman made a bid of Rs. 1,600 in place of the usual Rs. 260. The price having been thus artificially (and spitefully) raised, the stone-cutters found it beyond their power to purchase raw materials for their trade from the new lessee. The uncle retaliated by organizing the stone-cutters so that they refused, under an oath taken with their hands placed on the *Ramayana*, to buy stone from one who did not actually work in stone. The headman had to resign next year, and the bid for the quarry reached no higher than the usual Rs. 260.

A case is still pending in the court of the Subdivisional Officer with regard to the title of a pile of stone worth about Rs. 760. There is a rich businessman in the village who was originally neutral. The headman however suspected that he might join his uncle's party. In order to forestall such a move the headman cited his name as a witness in the case pending before court. The result was that the headman succeeded in antagonizing the rich man who could no longer remain neutral. Curiously enough, some of the people who were hostile to the rich man on other accounts, now openly sided with the headman.

### *Favourable signs*

Among the students of the Barpali High School, there are seventy-two who expressed their willingness in a meeting to anyhow get rid of the faction in the village. These students come from families belonging to both factions, but

they do not themselves want to take sides. They organized the worship (*Puja*) of Ganesha and performed this in the house of the headman. The young men have taken up the weekly village cleaning programme also.

Some of the young men belonging to the stone-cutter caste, numbering about sixty, have vowed not to join any of the warring factions, and to work together in their caste trade. A few days ago, they observed *Shramadan* or voluntary gift of labour, and deposited the day's earning in a common fund to be used for public purposes.

There was some amount of misunderstanding in the minds of a local medical practitioner and several other villagers with regard to the intentions of the A. F. S. C., the possible effects of the posting of a village worker, who in their opinion had not displayed enough tact in dealing with the local situation.

### *The crucial meeting*

The worker posted in the village was first tackled in the fortnightly meeting. He was encouraged not to abandon the village in despair, but face the situation. It was agreed that a special effort should be made in order to hold a common meeting of the villagers to decide upon the questions of the worker's permanent stay in the village. Up to now it had not been possible to have a house built for him through the co-operation and willingness of the villagers themselves.

About sixty people attended the meeting. After a silence of about fifteen minutes, a member of the panchayat raised a question about the common fund. Subscription had been raised to help the Government during the second world war. It appeared that proper accounts had not been kept and some money even misappropriated. After a preliminary discussion of this kind, the question of the village worker was taken up. A large amount of talking went on, and it was eventually decided that the villagers were not in a position to build a house for him, as there was no unanimity of opinion. The meeting then broke up.

The village worker and the rural life analyst retired into the guest house where the former was temporarily residing.

When they were about to retire, the rich man, accompanied by some villagers, came to the place, expressed regret and promised to build a house if the worker decided not to quit the village, even though others might not co-operate. After they had left, another batch of eight from the headman's party came under the latter's instruction and said that they would like the worker to stay on, and a house would be built for him even if others did not co-operate.

### *Follow-up*

After some amount of deliberation at night, the two members of the A. F. S. C. decided that they would make an intensive effort to come into friendly contact with the villagers. From next morning, they personally approached each of the leaders of the village individually in their private leisure hour, and tried to explain to them in detail all about the Friends' project, and to meet their opposition in every case with sympathy and tact. This took about a week's time.

In the meanwhile, contact was also established with the villagers in the fields and stone quarries, where both spent hours at a stretch. The village physician, the headman and the rich man, who was his opponent, were treated with the same respect which was usually shown to them by the average poor villagers. The physician had to be specially assured that the medical programme of the project did not mean in any to endanger his position and status but, on the other hand, they wanted to help him personally in the further development of his own profession and leadership. Once, while he was ailing, the workers presented him with fruits and helped in nursing him. This made them friends.

Every afternoon, children returning from school would collect near the residence of the workers in the guest house and watch them preparing tea over a kerosene stove. New games were taught to them, and the children's mothers gradually became favourably disposed towards the workers. The older schoolboys were also approached, and then organized for a cleaning programme, while a beginning was made for preparing a model vegetable garden. The last piece of work could not be proceeded with for lack of time.

For, in the meanwhile, one of the factions had taken up the programme of digging a well on a disputed piece of land, partly through their own effort and partly with governmental support. The other faction took up the challenge, and started working on a well in another part of the village. The worker suggested that this well should be of the new type designed by the A.F.S.C. built of reinforced concrete rings of varying sizes and fitted with a pump. The well was dug in seven day's time; while the entire work was over in 24 day's time. When the other faction saw the new well, they wanted a cover for their own well, as well as a pump to be fitted to it. Both the factions became so deeply involved in well-digging operations, and the competition turned out to be of such a healthy kind that little time was left for wasting in quarrels.

In course of time, while the programme of digging the well was still under way, a proposal came from the leaders of the village to sit down jointly and reconsider the housing problem of the village worker. One evening, it was decided at a meeting held near the pump-well that each household should contribute eight annas and each man would give one day's labour for setting up the house. Stone was also to be collected for the purpose. Timber was offered by the headman and one of the leaders of the opposite party. The village worker, in the meantime, had gathered some timber from a nearby jungle with the help of a few villagers. And eventually, the house was completed almost wholly through the co-operation of the villagers themselves.

A week after the draft of this report was written, another meeting of all the villagers was held in order to find out ways and means for repairing the village road, which is in a very bad condition during rains. The leaders of both the factions were equally interested, and when the work began, they spent a considerable time in supervision while the village worker helped actively in the construction work. On the first day, 80 people worked, on the second, 200, while on the third, 30 people completed the earth-work of the road. What remains to be done is to spread gravel on the top, and, at present, the villagers are planning how to do it when the work in the fields leaves them a little more leisure.

# SUPPRESSION OF HUMAN SACRIFICE AMONG THE HILL TRIBES OF ORISSA

By M. N. DAS

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NO one has tried to trace the origin of the custom of human sacrifice among the hill-tribes of India. It was practised over a wide area covering the hill tracts of Orissa, Madras and Chota Nagpur.\* These were inhabited by many tribes, the chief among them being the Khonds, and therefore the area was referred to as 'Khondistan' or the Land of the Khonds. After Khondistan had remained 'nominally under the British dominion for nearly seventy years', the discovery was made that 'human sacrifices were systematically and extensively celebrated, before thousands of spectators over a large tract of country'.<sup>1</sup> It was in the year 1835, that the Hindoo chief of the small Goomsoor country revolted against the British. 'The Goomsoor Zaminḍary lies between 90°40' and 20°25' of N. Latitude and 80°10' and 85°5' of E. Longitude. Its extent from east to west may be estimated at about 60 miles and from north to south at about 48 miles.'<sup>2</sup> In the cold season of 1835-36, British troops marched against the chief of Goomsoor and while suppressing the rebellion, they 'first ascended the Ghauts lying at the back of the district of Ganjam', and made their 'first acquaintance with the Khonds and their country.' 'It was then discovered that these people had been in the immemorial habit of performing annual sacrifices of human victims, the victims being usually purchased or stolen in the plains below, and sold to the Khonds, by persons who made a trade of such dealings'.<sup>3</sup> It was to the credit of Mr. G. E. Russell, Senior Member of the Board of Revenue and afterwards Member of Council at the Madras Presidency,

\* Vide report of J. P. Grant, *India Home Consultations*, Range 187/Vol. 17.

<sup>1</sup> *Selections from Records of Govt. of India*, Madras. No. XXIV, Part I, 11.

<sup>2</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 17.

that the discovery was made. Mr. Russell headed the operation in Goomsoor. On 12th August 1839, he sent his first report from Berhampore about the Khonds to the Government of Madras in the following terms : 'The change from Goomsoor to the colder climate and open country of the table land, where the hills are bare of jungle, the inhabitants infinitely more numerous, was very striking. Their language differs from that of all other classes, and is understood by very few lowlanders. Like other nations, they have their feuds, and frequently war with their neighbours. Head for head is their universal law. Their love of liquor and tobacco is excessive. The fruit of the Ippa tree affords them a very strong spirit, and a palm peculiar to their country, yields toddy, which though pleasant when fresh, is extremely intoxicating in a fermented state. They draw no milk from any description of cattle, yet they have none of the ordinary prejudices of caste, and eat anything except the dog, domestic cat, beasts of prey, vulture, kite and snake. Among the tribes westward of Sooradah the destruction of female children is common. I believe I may say general. The same practice does not exist in the Maliah (Khond districts) subject to Goomsoor, but the barbarous ceremony of human sacrifices exists there, and among many of their neighbouring tribes, and is of annual occurrence. In some places the victims are of both sexes—in others males only.'<sup>4</sup>

On receipt of this intelligence from Mr. Russell, the Government of Madras wrote back to him on 9th September 1836, 'The Governor in Council considers it highly desirable that measures should be taken for procuring the abolition of infanticide and human sacrifice. Where ever British influence already prevails, or can be newly introduced, it should be vigorously exercised for the suppression of these barbarous rites.'<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Russell took nearly a year's time to get fully acquainted with the rite and submitted to the Government of Madras an interesting report on 11th May 1837. This is what he wrote : 'The ceremonies attending this barbarous rite and still

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<sup>4</sup> *Selections from Records, Madras, No. XXIV, Part I, 11.*

<sup>5</sup> *Selections from Records, Madras, No. XXIV, No. 1197.*

more the mode of destroying life, vary in different parts of the country. In the maliahs of Goomsoor the sacrifice is offered annually to "Thadha Pennoo" (the earth), under the effigy of a bird, intended to represent the Peacock, with the view of propitiating the Deity to grant favourable seasons and crops. Besides these periodical sacrifices, others are made by single mootahs (villages), and even by individuals, to avert any threatening calamity from sickness, or other causes. It is believed that the victims may be of any caste, sex or age; but Mr. Stevenson to whose inquiry I am indebted for most of my information on this subject, did not hear of any instances of Khonds having been sacrificed. Grown men are the most esteemed, because the most costly. Children are purchased and reared for years with the family of the person who ultimately devotes them to a cruel death when circumstances are supposed to demand a sacrifice at his hands. They seem to be treated with kindness and if young are kept under no constraint, but when old enough to be sensible of the fate that awaits them, they are placed in fetters and guarded. There appears to be no difficulty in procuring victims—most of those who were rescued had been sold by their parents or nearest relations. Persons of riper age are kidnapped by wretches who trade in human flesh. The victim must always be purchased, the price is paid indifferently in brass, utensils, cattle or corn. The Zanee or Priest officiates at the sacrifice. For a month prior to the sacrifice there is much feasting and intoxication and dancing round the 'Meriah' (victim), who is adorned with garlands, and, on the day before the performance of the barbarous rite, is stupefied with toddy and made to sit, or if necessary, is bound at the bottom of a post, bearing the effigy above described. The assembled multitude then dance around to music, and addressing the earth, say, "O God we offer the sacrifice to you—give us good crops, seasons and health", after which they address the victim, "We bought you with a price, and did not seize you—now we sacrifice you according to custom, and no sin rests on us". On the following day, the victim being again intoxicated and anointed with oil, each individual present touches the anointed part, and wipes the oil on his own head. All then proceed in procession around



the village, and its boundaries, preceded by music, bearing the victim, and a pole, to the top of which is attached a tuft of peacock's feathers. On returning to the post which is placed near the village deity called "Zakaree Pennoo" and represented by three stones, near which the brass effigy in the shape of the peacock is buried, kill a hog in sacrifice, and having allowed the blood to flow into a pit prepared for the purpose, the victim who, if it has been found possible, has been previously made senseless from intoxication is seized and thrown in, and his face pressed down until he is suffocated in the bloody mire amid the noise of instruments. The Zanee then cuts a piece of flesh from the body and buries it with ceremony near the effigy and village idol as an offering to the earth. All the rest afterwards go through the same form and carry the bloody prize to their villages where the same rites are performed, part being interred near the village idol, and little bits on the boundaries. The head and face remain untouched, and the bones when bare are buried with them in the pit. Of the many ways in which the unhappy victim is destroyed in different parts, that just described is perhaps the least cruel. In Sreerampoora and Guddapooram in the maliahs of Chinna Kimeddy, the effigy represents the elephant, and there, as in part of the Goomsoor maliahs also, the flesh is cut off when the unfortunate creature is still alive. I have understood that in Jeypore and Kalahandy and Bastar the victims are supplied by seizing inhabitants of the neighbouring provinces.<sup>16</sup>

It is unfortunate that though the crime came to the notice of the authorities, no measure for immediate suppression was taken. Mr. Russell felt that the time was still not ripe for any prompt action. He had only acquainted himself with a small portion of Khondistan which commenced at Jeypore and extended southward beyond the Mahanadi, embracing also 'many parts of the Nagpore provinces and a large belt of territory hitherto independent'. Feeling discouraged himself, he wrote to the Government of Madras: 'We must not allow the cruelty of the practice to

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<sup>16</sup> *Selections from Records, Madras, No. XXIV.*

blind us to the consequences of too rash a zeal in our endeavours to suppress it. The superstitions of ages cannot be eradicated in a day. The people with whom we have to deal have become known to us only within the last few months, and our intercourse has been confined to a very small portion of a vast population, among the greater part of whom the same rites prevail, and of whose country and language we may be said to know almost nothing. We must not shut our eyes to the fact, that, although we may desire to limit our interference to the territory owing subjection to us, any measure of coercion would arouse the jealousy of a whole race, possessing the strongest feelings of clanship and, whatever may be their dissensions in ordinary life, likely to make common cause in support of their common religion. Are the Government prepared to engage in an undertaking, which to be effectual to the end in view, must lead to the permanent occupation of an immense territory, and involve us in a war with people with whom we have now no connection, and no cause for quarrel, in a climate inimical to the constitution of strangers, and at an expense which no human foresight can calculate ?” On the basis of Mr. Russell’s report, the Government of Madras agreed that there should be no direct action against the ‘dark warriors of Khondistan’ and issued the following minute on 21st November 1837, ‘The Right Hon’ble the Governor in Council has perused with feeling of intense and painful interest the accounts given of the practice of human sacrifices carried on in the maliahs of Goomsoor as well as throughout Gondwana, and his regret is greatly enhanced at finding there is no possibility of adopting measures for putting down this barbarous custom at once... ..The Governor in Council is fully aware that the evil is a crying one. He cannot however but concur with Mr. Russell that in the present state at least of our relations with the countries in which it prevails, its extinctions must be gradual and voluntary.’<sup>8</sup>

If Mr. Russell felt discouraged in championing the suppression of meriah sacrifice, one of the young English officers

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*Selections from Records, Madras, No. XXIV.*

*ibid.*

under him stepped forward to take up the mission with exceptional zeal. He was Captain (afterwards Colonel) J. Campbell, who had been Assistant and Secretary to the Hon'ble Mr. Russell throughout the war, and who was appointed thereafter as Assistant Collector and Magistrate to Goomsoor and Surada, with special charge of the Khond inhabitants of these countries.<sup>9</sup> Col. Campbell began to act as a 'Pioneer in the Cause'. 'He confined himself to the Khond districts of Goomsoor, which were then in very favourable state for being worked upon, as a part of them had suffered intensely in the operations of the war, many chiefmen had suffered capital punishment and the people were thoroughly cowed. In the cold season next after the close of the war, viz. 1837/38, Coll. Campbell went into the Goomsoor hills and collected from the Khonds 100 meriahs or persons bought and therefore by Khond law liable to become victims, whom he took away with him into the plains. He also caused the Khond Head men in a great assembly of them that he collected together to swear to abandon the rite.'<sup>10</sup>

But the works of Col. Campbell seemed to be too aggressive to the Government of Madras, it was feared that there was danger in his method which might rouse the Khonds. Accordingly, the Government 'instructed him to abide strictly by Mr. Russell's recommendations and to restrict himself entirely to advice and persuasion',<sup>11</sup> forgetting that 'bribery is powerless when the people believe a crime to be their greatest earthly gain, and moral suasion seems impracticable when applied to races, who would consider a Missionary an acceptable offering to the Gods'.<sup>12</sup> In spite of the orders of the Government of Madras however 'in each of next cold seasons, Coll. Campbell made a short visit to the hills, and occasionally took away some meriahs'. 'His opinion was that if he had been allowed to command the cessation of the rite, and to punish violators of that command, he could succeed in suppressing

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<sup>9</sup> Vide *Reports of the Meriah Agents*, Ganjam (1837-61).

<sup>10</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 17.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Friend of India*, Sept. 28, 1854,

it in the Goomsoor Khond hills without risk'.<sup>13</sup> He was anxious to give a show of force, because the Hindu chiefs had told him that they could not set themselves up against the immemorial custom of the Khond country. If however Government placed detachments of armed peons in their forts so as to appear to compel them, they would carry out the wishes of the Government. But Col. Campbell could do nothing against the wishes of the Madras Government.

In 1842, Col. Campbell was suddenly called upon to join a regiment in China.<sup>14</sup> Upon the departure of this officer, the meriah sacrifice, which had received a check under him, and perhaps even ceased for a year or two in Goomsoor began to revive again. Elsewhere, beyond Goomsoor, in the vast territories of the hill tribes, the practice continued unabated as usual. Col. Campbell returned to Goomsoor five years later in 1847. The officers who had succeeded him in 1842 confined their activities only to Goomsoor and occasionally tried to cross into other tribal areas. Their works were praiseworthy, but they were not effective in producing any outstanding result.

Col. Campbell resumed duty in Goomsoor in 1847, but his hands were tied as before by standing orders of the Madras Government. It is difficult to imagine how human sacrifice could have been effectively put to an end to under the above circumstances had not at this time Lord Dalhousie come to India as Governor General.

The period of eight years from 1848 to 1856, which saw the administration of Lord Dalhousie forms an important epoch in the history of the country. He was the youngest Governor General who had till then assumed the responsibilities of the Indian Empire.<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, he left England in an indifferent state of health and never kept well in India, from where he came back almost in a dying state. 'I do not like the appearance of his health at all. In other respects

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<sup>13</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol 17.

<sup>14</sup> *Vide Reports of Meriah Agents, Ganjam.*

<sup>15</sup> *Friend of India*, Jan. 20, 1848.

everything about him is satisfactory'.<sup>16</sup> so wrote Sir John Hobhouse, the President of the India Board, in his diary about Lord Dalhousie a few days before the latter proceeded to India to take office. But it was this young and sickly Governor General who extinguished from the soil of India the barbarous rites of infanticide and human sacrifice once for all.

When Lord Dalhousie took up the reins of office in January 1848, the raja of 'the little state of Angool was up in arms against the British. This semi-independent state was situated not far from the British capital of Orissa, Cuttack, and was at the gateway of the Khond territories extending north and westward. Col. Campbell himself was conducting the 'little war against the Rajah of Angool',<sup>17</sup> and brought the war to a quick end. Lord Dalhousie did not want to follow a mild and persuasive policy as adopted by the Madras Government, but an aggressive policy of show of force and its application when necessary. His aim was not to confine the the operation to a small tribal area but to traverse the entire land occupied by the hill tribes for the purpose of suppressing the meriah, with Angool as a base of operations.

Accordingly, immediately at the conclusion of the Angool campaign, Col. Campbell was directed to march with his troops beyond Angool into the territory of Baud where the Khonds dwelt in large numbers. On the 21st of February, 1848, the Governor General wrote the following to the Court of Directors, 'Coll. Campbell has brought the Angool affair to a very complete close. The Rajah is a prisoner at Cuttack, with the followers, who have all been captured. Coll. Campbell, according to the intention originally entertained, has marched on with a small force into Baud. And there can be no doubt that the example among those wild and recusant tribes would be most salutary, and strengthen greatly the hands of the Government in effecting the suppression of the barbarous rites they practise against which the Government has officially and repeatedly declared unmitigated and lasting hostility.'<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Diary of Lord Broughton*, Add. Mss. 43751, f. 29.

<sup>17</sup> *Letters to the Court of Directors*, 1848, Vol. 1.

<sup>18</sup> *Letters to the Court of Directors*, 1848, Vol 1.

The Khonds and their brother tribes, such as, the Saurahs, Panwas, Gonds, Hos, Santals etc., did not anticipate that the British would enter into their lands. The general impression among the intelligent men of the tribes was that 'the Government was indifferent to the sacrifice'. 'This view was founded on the fact that no decisive and comprehensive measures had been adopted with respect to it'.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, the tribes had their own justification for the sacrifice which they performed. They sacrificed the victims 'because the rite has been practised from the beginning; because it has been sanctioned by the Rajahs; because it is essential to the existence of mankind in health, and to the continuation of the species; because it is essential to the productive powers of nature by which men live; because it is necessary to the gods for food; because its suppression by the Government would be as unjust as the abolition of the Hindu worship at Puri; because the victims are the property of those who offer them, being bought with the fruits of their labours upon the soil; because the parents of the victims make them over fully to the Khonds through the procurer; and finally because the Gods have positively ordained the rite.'<sup>20</sup>

Col. Campbell however made it clear on his entry into Baud territory that the rite would be put down with a firm hand. As he wrote from Baud on 25th March 1848, 'I lost no opportunity of clearly and forcibly explaining to them the firm intention of the Government to put an end to the sacrifice of human victims. From the principal chiefs I took a written agreement to refrain from the sacrifice of human beings and from the chiefs of villages a declaration to the same purport holding my sword.'<sup>21</sup> Within a few days he was able to rescue a large number of victims, though the Khonds did all they could to hide them. They were certainly taken aback and did not dare to give a fight. Moreover, the local Hindu chiefs supported the Colonel in his noble work. On the 1st of April, 1848, Col. Campbell sent the following note to the Government from his

<sup>19</sup> Vide *Report of the Meriah Agents*, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> *Report of the Meriah Agents*, p. 10-11.

<sup>21</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 13.

camp : 'The two remaining victims of Johlingia were brought to me yesterday by the Hindu chiefs of that mootah making since my last report 50 meriahs, and including 56 rescued by the Assistant Agent, Mac Viccar in Bondagur, 106 persons since the 26th ultimo. Nearly all the meriahs in the Boad maliahs (districts) have been taken under British protection. Wherever our operations have extended and I believe we have nearly traversed the entire country, the same stratagems, deceit and procrastination have met us at every turn to evade the delivery of the meriahs'.<sup>22</sup> The report pleased Lord Dalhousie very much and Col. Campbell was informed that, 'The Governor General in Council has perused with much satisfaction these reports of your proceedings and notices with commendations the conduct of the officers employed to carry out your directions.'<sup>23</sup> The number of the rescued victims swelled day by day and on the 1st of May, 1848, the Governor General was able to write the following to the Court of Directors : 'Coll. Campbell has brought the little campaign among the Khonds above the Goomsoor country to a very satisfactory conclusion. They have marched through a country where, it is stated, a European never was seen before ; have induced the Bissyes to give in their submission ; and after recovering no less than 235 meriah victims, have received the oaths of the whole body of chiefs, sworn in their most solemn form, to abandon the human sacrifice for ever. Coll. Campbell deserves and shall receive all the praise I can give him.'<sup>24</sup>

Col. Campbell and his men had to face considerable difficulty in those unexplored hills. 'The heat of the weather was terrific, and a considerable amount of sickness had occurred amongst the field-force. The force had, during the campaign, visited regions on which, probably, the foot of a European had never before trod.'<sup>25</sup> But inspite of heat and sickness the troops worked on. The Governor General who appreciated their difficulties was ever willing to help. On the

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<sup>22</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 13.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, 19 April 1848.

<sup>24</sup> Letter to the Court of Directors, Vol. 1.

<sup>25</sup> *Allen's Indian Mail*, June 2, 1848.

20th of May, 1848, the Secretary to the Government of India wrote to Col. Campbell, 'I am directed to acquaint you that in compliance with your suggestion, the Governor General in Council authorises the medical officer at Russelcondah to be placed in charge of the rescued meriahs, sebundies (soldiers) and servants of the Agency. The Governor General in Council further sanctions the erection of a hospital and dispensary as proposed at Russelcondah.'<sup>26</sup>

The meriah victims rescued from the Baud territory were all children. Out of 235, there were 134 boys and 101 girls.<sup>27</sup> Their future was a great responsibility to the Government. They had none. In most cases their ignorant and uncivilized parents had sold them in infancy for the purpose of sacrifice, and in other cases they had been stolen and sold by the professional agents. The Governor General decided to take the entire responsibility of those unfortunate beings at the cost of the Government. On 7th June 1848, Lord Dalhousie issued the following minute: 'The children devoted to the meriah sacrifice and rescued by the Government must be cared for by the Government until they are able to provide for themselves. The only question is as to the mode in which this obligation is to be fulfilled. It is, I apprehend, neither desirable nor practicable to restore them to persons of their own family or their own tribes. To constitute them a separate meriah colony settled in one place and encouraged to intermarry would be highly objectionable: for it would perpetuate in their own minds the memory of their separation, and serve to keep alive in the minds of the population the recollection of a rite of which we wish to obliterate every trace.

'To commit them exclusively to the charge of missionaries might lead to misrepresentation of the object we have had in view in recovering the meriah victims.

'I incline to recommend that they should be kept for the present under supervision on which the Government can depend either that of Missionaries' or of persons whose care of the children may be open to inspection.

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<sup>26</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 13.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*



'They should be brought up to provide for themselves in the ordinary pursuits of the country—both boys and girls. The former might be started in the world with a pair of bullocks, and the latter receive a small sum of money as a dowry on marriage.'<sup>28</sup>

It was to the credit of Col. Campbell that he took a very kind attitude towards the meriah children. Brought up in a peculiar atmosphere and constantly awaiting a horrible death, those ill-fated victims had almost become abnormal in mind. They required therefore a very kind and patient treatment. On 10th June 1848, Col. Campbell wrote from his headquarters at Berhampore, 'The meriah girls at Suradah are giving much trouble, and becoming very clamorous. I am using my best endeavours to get them suitably settled. The large crowd (of victims) at Nawagaum are most difficult to manage. They constantly quarrel amongst themselves, and run away but generally have either returned or been brought back. They are impatient of all restraint, and it appears to me an advisable measure to lessen the number at Nawagaum by placing a portion of them at Aska.'<sup>29</sup>

The work of Col. Campbell drew the attention of the East India House and the Chairman of the Court of Directors, J. L. Lashington, wrote in a letter to Lord Dalhousie on 24th June 1848, 'It is most satisfactory to learn that Colonel Campbell has been so successful in the Goomsoor country and that we may here hope an end will be put to those horrid human sacrifices among the Khonds.'<sup>30</sup>

Having achieved satisfactory results in the Baud territory, Col. Campbell looked towards the land beyond Baud. The immediate territory beyond Baud was Chinna Kimedya, a vast hilly tract. With an idea to launching his next campaign against the hill tribes of this region, Col. Campbell wrote to the Government on 24th June 1848, 'I am using every means within my power to obtain as accurate and complete information as is possible with reference to Chinna Kimedya,

<sup>28</sup> Governor General's *Minutes*, Vol. 1, 1848.

<sup>29</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 13.

<sup>30</sup> *Letters from the Court of Directors*, Vol. 1.

and its hill tribes. I am satisfied however that Chinna Kimeddy should be scene of the operations of this agency as soon as the rains are over. The people of those maliahs are universally reported to be of a ferocious and intractable disposition ; that human sacrifices are offered there, seems undoubted though of the extent of the sacrifice I have as yet procured no positive testimony.<sup>31</sup> Chinna Kimeddy full of 'steep and difficult ghauts', with a people of 'fierce character', was far beyond the pale of British authority. But Col. Campbell was informed on 22nd July 1848, that, 'The Governor General in Council will be prepared to comply with any application for the annexation at the proper season of the above named tract of country (Chinna Kimeddy) to the jurisdiction of your agency.'<sup>32</sup>

On the 2nd of August, 1848, Lord Dalhousie issued another minute in which he made his policy clear in emphatic words. 'The Government of India', wrote the Governor General, 'has already declared its firm determination to put an end to the observance of the rite of human sacrifice within their territories.

'I cordially concur in that determination which in my opinion should now be pursued without swerving and with steady perseverance. Colonel Campbell should be authorised to prosecute his measures during the next season. He should have enjoined to avoid if possible engaging us in a little war, and should be enjoined also to try every method of persuasion before he has recourse to force.

'But all his persuasions should be supported by the near neighbourhood of a military force, and he should carefully avoid exposing himself even to temporary discomfiture by employing with him a force not sufficiently strong for every purpose.'<sup>33</sup> Col. Campbell was personally instructed that, 'If you are resisted and the employment of arms becomes unavoidable, the operations must be of so decisive a nature as to prevent the possibility of a protracted struggle.'<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 13.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

In the cold season of 1848, Col. Campbell began his campaign in Chinna Kimedy. 'The Chinna Kimedy is according to survey upwards of 200 miles in length by 70 or 80 miles in breadth, and this distance is increased by the nature of a country destitute of roads and beset with beds of torrents, stony paths, and unopened forest, bidding defiance to rapidity of movement.'<sup>35</sup> On the 16th of December, 1848, Col. Campbell wrote from his camp to the Government of India: 'Our progress up to this point has been very satisfactory, the districts of Bamda and Serampore having given up their meriahs, and the Rajah of Chinna Kimedy has sent in five meriahs from Beracote.

'There is a peculiarity in the manner of performing the meriah sacrifice in the Chinna Kimedy maliahs, the victims being slain before the rude image of an elephant round which they had been previously dragged; with loud shouts and the beating of drums. These images are to be found in almost every village and I caused the inhabitants to destroy them as a proof of their sincerity in abandoning the sacrifice.'<sup>36</sup>

In course of his operation, Col. Campbell learnt more about the cruel rite and the way the victims were procured. In an interesting letter dated the 23rd of December, 1848, Col. Campbell wrote, 'I have made very minute enquiries respecting the price paid for meriahs in the Chinna Kimedy maliahs and I find that they cost from 25 to 40 gunties each according to circumstances. A buffalo, bullock, pig, goat, a brass pot being each reckoned a guntie. Thus when the bargain is struck for 25 gunties, five of each of the named animals and brass pots are paid which at the low valuation of 4 rupees for each buffalo and bullock, 2 rupees for each pig, 1 rupee for each goat and  $\frac{1}{2}$  rupee for each brass vessel would give the value of Rs. 62.8 annas as the lowest price of a meriah and many of the Khonds have asserted to me that they have known 80 gunties paid for one. I have no doubt that the great price which the

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<sup>35</sup> *ibid*, 187/Vol. 30, Aug. 13, 1850.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*, 187/Vol. 21.

meriahs cost has given rise to the practice general in the districts of Subarnagherry, Jedoomboo and Bundooree of purchasing females who having promiscuous intercourse with the young men of the village their children of unknown fathers are considered meriahs (victims) and in due time sacrificed. The same miserable fate awaits the wretched woman when she ceases to bear children.<sup>37</sup>

In many places the surrender of victims was secured with much difficulty. The tribes were never willing to make a voluntary surrender of their costly purchases. In most places they tried to hide the victims. But the vigilance of the operation force was too much for them. At times a meriah boy himself would escape out of his cruel master's clutches and inform the rescue party about the presence of other victims. Immediately Campbell's men would surround the suspected place and rescue the meriahs. By the 30th of December, 1848, Col. Campbell had been able to rescue as many as 106 meriahs in Chinna Kimedy.<sup>38</sup> In the Baud country left behind, his assistant, Captain MacVicar, kept a constant vigilance on account of which no victim could be sacrificed.

At the beginning of the year 1849, Col. Campbell wrote to the Government on the 16th of January, 'The total suppression of the meriah sacrifice throughout the Boad maliahs and the apparent intention of the Khond chiefs never again to resume the rites, affords evidence of the success of last year's operations more complete than I had ventured to anticipate. I feel assured the Government will readily perceive the impossibility save by some Providential interference, of eradicating from the minds of a debased and superstitious people in the short space of less than two years a rite deeply venerated, and handed down to them from time immemorial. They do not sacrifice now because they dare not. Constant supervision, occasional visits by European functionaries, and above all using such means as are within our reach for elevating them from their depressed condition will eventually cause them heartily to abandon a practice from which they are at

<sup>37</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 21.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*

present restrained by fear.<sup>39</sup> On March 17, 1849, he further informed the Government that, 'The total number of meriahs rescued this year is 307 making an aggregate of 547 in the two past seasons...One hundred and eighty four miles of new routes never before traversed by Europeans have been surveyed this season in the Khond country'.<sup>40</sup>

The prolonged stay in those hills and jungles was not a very welcome thing to the health of the Englishmen. By the middle of 1849, Captain MacVicar suffered from 'a most severe and dangerous attack of jungle fever' and was advised by his medical attendant to go with as little delay as possible to the Cape or to Europe for the recovery of his health. Out of 12 officers who were on service with Col. Campbell in the cold season of 1847-48 in Baud, 2 died of fever immediately on leaving the hills, 4 were sent to Europe on sick certificate, 3 to sea and elsewhere, 1 retired from service and by the month of May 1849, only 2 were present with him.<sup>41</sup> Finally Col. Campbell himself was taken by the fever of the jungle and was forced to write to the Government on 31st May 1849, 'It is with the greatest reluctance that I avail myself of the accompanying medical certificate and solicit permission for me to proceed to Madras by the first opportunity and to resign my appointment from the date of my embarkation to Europe. Though my health has been very precarious for some time past I indulged the hope that with care I could hold out another season, and at least complete the work of meriah suppression in Chinna Kimeddy so happily begun. But I have been obliged most reluctantly to give in. No constitution can long withstand the baneful effect of the climate of these Hills'.<sup>42</sup>

The sickness of Col. Campbell perturbed Lord Dalhousie and he wrote, 'I am very sorry indeed to lose Colonel Campbell'<sup>43</sup>, but had no other way except granting him leave

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<sup>39</sup> *India HomeConsultations*, 187/Vol. 21.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.* 187/Vol. 22.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Letters to the Presidency, July 6, 1849.

to proceed to Europe immediately'. During his absence, his assistant Lt. Frye was authorised to conduct the affairs of the meriah agency.

Lt. Frye was an able man and had the advantage of understanding the language of the hill tribes which he had mastered with great labour. Besides that he had learned Oriya, Hindustani and Telugu. To explain the purpose of his mission to the hill people he 'employed the Khond language as extensively as possible.' 'The bonds of security and engagements to abolish the sacrifice taken from the Khonds are invariably expressed in that language and in the simplest terms.'<sup>44</sup> After a few months labour in the hill tracts, the following news appeared in Allen's *Indian Mail*: 'Frye, the Assistant Agent for the suppression of meriah sacrifices, has been very successful in the recovery of intended victims. He is accompanied by young Ricketts; they have nearly got to Nagpore, and have recovered 150 meriahs, in addition to 140 previously sent in here (Russelcondah). No two men in the service could indeed be better fitted for the work, as their whole soul is in the undertaking.'<sup>45</sup>

By the close of August 1850, Captain MacVicar came back from the Cape of Good Hope whither he had gone for recovery after being attacked by severe illness.<sup>46</sup> After resumption of duty, he wrote to the Government on October 7, 1850, 'Consequent upon the absence of Col. Campbell and myself, and the necessity of Lt. Frye's confining his exertions to the maliahs of Chinna Kimedy during the whole of the last season, the Boad and Goomsoor hills have remained unvisited since the beginning of 1849. It is therefore of very great importance that the tribes inhabiting those tracts be visited as early as practicable to prevent the possibility of any false impression arising out of our protracted absence.'<sup>47</sup>

Besides Goomsoor, Baud and Chinna Kimedy where the

<sup>44</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 27, Dec. 22, 1849.

<sup>45</sup> Allen's *Indian Mail*, April 2, 1850.

<sup>46</sup> Vide *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 30.

<sup>47</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 31.

operation had already begun for some time, there lay other extensive areas inhabited by the hill tribes and Captain MacVicar turned his attention towards those new fields. Accordingly, he further wrote to the Government, 'On taking leave of the Boad districts I propose moving towards the Kalahandy Zamindary. The Zamindary of Kalahandy is more wild than that of Chinna Kimedy, and it is reported to be about hundred miles in length and to comprize two large districts, Mudanpore and the extensive country of Tooamould. As in Mudanpore so in Tooamould human sacrifices are slain, large number of victims are still offered to their sanguinary deity, and when it is remembered that these districts form part of the frontier of Chinna Kimedy it becomes an object of especial importance to make some prompt demonstration there. From the best information I have been able to obtain through the Vakeel of the Kalahandy Rajah it appears that partial efforts have been made at various periods to check these sacrifices. The Court of Nagpore have interfered, but not very successfully nor do I think that the complete extinction of this odious practice can ever be hoped for from any native agency.'<sup>48</sup> Captain MacVicar further proposed that from Kalahandy he intended journeying through the other wild areas such as Maji Deso and Patna countries which too were scenes of frequent human sacrifices.

By this time it had become evident that the Government of Lord Dalhousie was determined to extinguish this crime in whichever part of India it existed and the Government were prepared to sanction any wide or large scale measure. While the operations were going on in the above hill tracts, in another extremity of India, Lord Dalhousie himself came across an old sacrificial place in the wild areas of the Punjab while making a tour in that part of India. It was by chance that he discovered the place, but nevertheless it increased his determination to wipe out the crime by all means. An interesting page from the personal diary of Lord Dalhousie, dated Sunday the 23rd of June 1850, reveals the fact.

'On Friday morning (21st) we left camp at 4 o'clock in the

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<sup>48</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 31, Oct. 7, 1850

morning.....The hills on this side were clothed to the very summit with forest, wherein the varying green of the pine and oak were mingled except where the grey cliffs, broke through the forest and relieved the gloominess of its tints. About one third of the way from the summit cultivation began, and thence down to the river bank the whole face of the mountain was a light expanse of corn fields, and orchards of apricot and peas. Midway a broad tableland afforded a site on which were placed the palace or fort of the Rajah ; and round it a group of village houses, all picturesque. The Rajah's house had all the character of a mountain stronghold, and with its tall square tower of grey stone, and the sharp peaked roof above it, the narrow slit windows, and the door halfway up the wall, it might readily have passed for (one word here in the Diary could not be read) armstrong tower. This I afterwards found was a very sacred place and was used as a temple ; the lower square tower connected with the first by a gallery, and the houses forming 3 sides of the square with the towers for the 4th, being the residences of the Rajah and his suite. No one is even admitted into this holy place : not even the tutor of the Rajah, who is a Hindoo, has even made his way into it, and frightful tales are told of the scenes which are still acted there. Not very many years ago it is well known that human sacrifices were weekly offered up before the idol of the Goddess Kali to whom the temple is dedicated, and it is believed that the horrid rite has not yet altogether ceased. The stated sacrifice has of course been abandoned ; nor can it be ascertained for certain that a victim is even offered now. But it is believed that occasionally some infirm old wretch, at death's door already, is brought to have his blood poured out before the Goddess : and the extreme secrecy which is observed,—the excessive jealousy with which all access is barred even to members of the Rajah's household, unless they be of their own tribe,—give colour to the belief.

*'This secrecy, however, is itself a proof that the last stage of the endurance of such horrors has been reached, and that in this and other hill states tributary to us, the sacrifice will soon for ever cease, if it has not ceased already.'*<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> *Diary of Dalhousie, 1850, Part II.*



On the 4th of December, 1850, Captain MacVicar suggested to the Government for an all-out assault : 'The more widely our operations are extended, the sooner will the sacrifice cease and the objects of the Government be finally secured. The larger surface we cover, the better for us in every respect ; for there can then be no mistake in regard to the unalterable resolution of the Government of India, to penetrate wherever the meriah sacrifice obtains<sup>50</sup> and to stay the evil. I would therefore earnestly request permission to address the Rajah of Kalahandy, who I know is anxious to visit me, on this subject, and I would solicit the Supreme Government<sup>\*</sup> to move the Resident of Nagpore to procure for me the valuable support of His Highness the Rajah.'<sup>50</sup>

Towards the end of 1850, the operation in the Maji Deso was brought to a favourable conclusion, all the meriahs in that area having been surrendered to Captain MacVicar. The Khoud leaders to a man had sworn to abstain from immolating human beings.

In the beginning of 1851, MacVicar entered the Patna Zemindary and rescued 27 victims. He wrote, 'The people are now convinced of our firm resolution not to leave the country until our purpose is effected.'<sup>51</sup> In that cold season the number of meriahs rescued by him and Capt. Frye came up to 70.

There in that new country, Captain MacVicar discovered yet another mode of sacrificing the victims. His note on this, dated 10th March 1851, is interesting. 'The mode of performing the sacrifice I learnt from several of their chiefs, it equals, if it does not exceed in cruelty the practice in other countries. On the day of sacrifice after the appointed ceremonies the meriah is surrounded by the Khonds, who beat him violently on the head with the heavy metal bangles which they purchase at the fairs and wear on these occasions. If this inhuman smashing does not immediately destroy the victim's life, an end is put to his sufferings by strangulation, a slit bamboo being used for

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<sup>50</sup> *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 33.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.* 187/Vol. 33, Jan. 11, 1851.

that purpose. Strips of flesh are then cut off the back, and each recipient of the precious treasure carries his portion to the stream which waters his fields, and there suspends it on a pole. The remains of the mangled carcase are then buried and funeral obsequies are performed 7 days subsequently, and repeated one year afterwards.<sup>52</sup>

While operations were going on in Goomsoor, Baud, Maji Deso, Patna, Kalahandi, Chinna Kimedya and Suradah to suppress the crime, attempts were made by Captain MacVicar to educate the people by establishing village schools. Attempts were first made at Goomsoor where the sacrifice had ceased for three years. But the opposition was intense. In the words of MacVicar, 'In the progress of unfortunate humanity good at first appears an evil to be resisted if needs be to the death.'<sup>53</sup> The old men of the hills recollected ancient traditions warning others against book learning, and they foreboded gloomy things if schools were set afloat. But nothing could deflect the Captain from his decision. Accordingly, as he writes himself, 'no opportunity was lost and no effort left untried to obtain the consent of a few men of influence. A school was accordingly commenced, shortly a second was permitted, and at the present time (April 1851) there are four at work with 59 students divided among them. For the rising generation this day of small things is full of promise; the old men are past hope, their spirits are inflexible, their eyes have grown dim in their old delusions and they will carry them to their funeral piles.'<sup>54</sup>

Before Captain MacVicar and Captain Frye had proceeded further in their work, both of them were taken by severe illness and were compelled to retire to Europe under medical advice. Captain Frye left in June 1851 and MacVicar in the following July. Before he had left his charge, Captain MacVicar summed up his work in the following words: 'The result of our labours under God's blessing has been briefly as follows. In the hitherto unvisited districts of Majideso, Pedda Kimedya, and the remote hills of Kalahandy, the foundation of

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<sup>52</sup>*ibid.*, 187/Vol. 34.

<sup>53</sup>*ibid.*, 187/Vol. 35, April 26, 1851.

<sup>54</sup>*ibid.*, 187/Vol. 35.

the suppression of the meriah sacrifice has been laid, our intercourse has been renewed with the Khonds of Goomsoor and Boad and the work consolidated, schools have been established in Upper Goomsoor and a road commenced from Konjeur to Sohanpore, great progress has been effected in the extensive tracts of Chinna Kimedý which have been thoroughly searched, 617 victims have been rescued and a brief visit has been paid to Sauradah where an interview was held with the Infanticidal Tribes.<sup>55</sup>

No sooner had MacVicar and Frye taken leave of the hills, Col. Campbell returned from Europe and resumed charge early in September 1851.<sup>56</sup> His first work was to increase the number of schools and on the 25th of September, 1851, he noted that 'Seven schools have been established in the Khond mountains of Goomsoor with an attendance of 51 of whom 22 are Khonds and the remainder Panwas, Gonds and other hill castes. Three of these school masters are meriahs who have been educated at the missionary schools at Berhampore and are married to meriahs brought up at the same institution.'<sup>57</sup> Col. Campbell sent as many meriah children as possible to be educated in the missionary schools at Berhampore, Cuttack and Balasore in order that those meriah boys could themselves be the future teachers of the tribes.<sup>58</sup>

In spite of all vigilance there were solitary instances when victims were sacrificed in some Khond village or other. On 28 April 1852, Col. Campbell informed the Governor General with regret that a meriah was sacrificed in Jeypore on the 21st of March. In reply to this the Governor General expressed his hope that greater exertions would be made to rescue all victims wherever they might be. Col. Campbell traversed all the unexplored areas and met the tribes who had not yet surrendered. In the most dangerous and secluded areas there were yet people who wanted to retain their ancient rite even at the cost of a fight. Col. Campbell had to face such a fight in one of the

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<sup>55</sup> *ibid*, 187/Vol. 35, April 26, 1851.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*, 187/Vol. 36.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid*, 187/Vol.

<sup>58</sup> *ibid*, 187/Vol. 42.

most inaccessible areas of Chinna Kimedy. From his camp at Subarnagherry he wrote the following report on the 9th of February, 1853: 'I regret to have to report that the people of the mootah of Toopungah of this district made a premeditated and unprovoked attack upon me. It was the only mootah of the extensive sacrificing tracts of Chinna Kimedy that had not made its submission. The people are a wild unruly set and have been long at variance with the Hindu chief of Subarnagherry and though summoned three successive seasons by this Agency they refused to come or give up their meriahs.

'I went myself with a party of sebundies (soldiers) to endeavour to hold personal communication with them; and to persuade them to submit, but I had no sooner reached the foot of the steep and thickly wooded hill, on which several of their villages are built, in a narrow deep dell, than I was received with shouts of defiance, and sounding of horns to summon the more distant members of the tribes. I endeavoured to parley with them but they would neither submit nor give up the meriah sacrifice, and declared their determination to fight the Sircar (Government). They came rushing down through the jungle in several parties, yelling and shouting their war cries. I ordered to fire over the nearest party as a warning. The moment these shots were discharged the men turned and fled up their mountains, followed but without any firing by the sebundies and matchlock men of the Hindoo Chief. Though I lament the attack that was made upon me, the result has been most satisfactory, the Khond chiefs of Toopungah hastened to the Hindu Chief of the districts, with one of their meriahs and entreated him to intercede with me for pardon promising that they would never again oppose the will of the Sircar nor have anything to say to the sacrifice of human beings.' <sup>59</sup>

In this hurricane campaign, Col. Campbell captured in many places the 'actual perpetrators' and the 'principal participators' in the human sacrifice. At several places he arrived just in time to save the victims from their imminent doom. On the 2nd of January, 1853, the Khonds of Bondigram had procured a victim and all necessary accessories

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<sup>59</sup> *ibid.*, 187/Vol. 49.

for a hasty sacrifice, but as Campbell writes, 'timely information enabled me to rescue the victim, a girl of about 6 years old, two hours only before the time appointed for her immolation.'<sup>60</sup> At many places however he, was greatly satisfied to see that his labour had borne fruit and that the crime had been abandoned once for all. 'In Patna and in Boad', wrote Campbell on April 13, 1853, 'I consider the meriah sacrifice to have been thoroughly suppressed, and I do not hesitate to state my conviction that also in Chinna Kimeddy and in Jeypore the sacrifice is at an end ..Boad Chinna Kimeddy, Jeypore, Kalahandy, and Patna are almost' blank spaces on the map, which affords as little aid in tracing the course and extent of the operations, as it did to me in directing my marches, often tedious and toilsome.'<sup>61</sup>

The result of all this was extraordinary. By April of 1853, twelve hundred and sixty victims had been rescued in all during a period of less than seven years. The Government took up a most considerate attitude towards these meriahs. Two hundred meriah children were sent to missionary schools at Berhampore and Balasore. One hundred and sixty-seven children were given for adoption to persons of character. More than three hundred grown-up meriahs were settled as cultivators in the plains. Most of the female meriahs were given in marriage to eligible persons. A few of the grown-up males supported themselves by labour or were employed in public services. And those meriahs who were old and incapable were supported by the state.<sup>62</sup>

The work of Col. Campbell was almost coming to an end. The suppression of an age-old crime practised by an ignorant people was successfully accomplished. But much yet remained to be done. So long these areas had remained unexplored. The Government of India now decided to open good roads in the Khond country.<sup>63</sup> According to a note of the Madras Government to the Government of India, dated the

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<sup>60</sup>*ibid.*, 187/Vol. 50.

<sup>61</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>62</sup>Vide *India Home Consultations*, 187/Vol. 50.

<sup>63</sup>*ibid.*, 187/Vol. 51.

19th of March, 1853, 'The advantages of the proposed line are obvious. The object is to increase the traffic between Nagpore and the coast, to render one of the finest portions of the Madras territory, the sugar and oil producing tracts of Goomsoor and the fine soil of Khondistan, accessible. At present it is almost impossible to wade through Goomsoor during a great part of the year, and Khondistan is scarcely known, but as an inhospitable tract infamous for human sacrifices and infanticide. It is however capable of producing much, and savage as the inhabitants are, they are not utterly barbarians. Their homes are constructed with great care. Their skill in cultivation is superior to much of that in the country below the Ghaut. They weave an excellent description of strong cloth, and are not averse from traffic, as is evinced by the readiness with which they take advantage of any opening to attend the markets in the country below the Ghauts. It cannot be doubted that intercourse would do more than any other measure to advance the civilisation of those people.' <sup>64</sup> The Government of Madras asked for authority to make a second class road from Berhampore to Russelcondah in the centre of the Goomsoor low country. In reply, the Secretary to the Government of India wrote on the 13th of April, 1853, 'The Most Noble the Governor General in Council is disposed to sanction the construction of a first class road from Berhampore to Russelcondah at the estimated cost of Rs. 1,42,246 subject to the confirmation of the Hon'ble Court of Directors which should be asked for immediately.' <sup>65</sup> On May 6, the Governor General in Council again sanctioned 'an expenditure amounting to Rs. 12,000 for the construction of a road from Cuttack to Angool towards Sambalpore'. It was also stated that, 'His Lordship in Council is further prepared to give immediate sanction to the completion of the construction of the remaining 120 miles between Angool and Sambalpore.' <sup>66</sup>

Before Col. Campbell had finally retired from the field of his labour in 1854, he had the supreme satisfaction of noting

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<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, 187/Vol. 51.

<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, 187/Vol 50.

wherever he went that, 'Not one deserted village was met with or heard of nor did a single case of evasion occur throughout the whole of these extensive tracts.' 'The Khonds assembled in our respective camps', wrote the Colonel on the eve of his departure, 'in crowds almost as soon as we reached our ground and with a freedom never before evinced by them selling or exchanging with our people the produce of their fields for money, beads or pieces of cloth. Each chief was wanted freely to express his sentiment on this important subject which many did without hesitation saying that when we first came among them they were like beasts in the jungle doing as their fathers had done before them. They now clearly comprehended that our only object in coming was to stop human sacrifice.

'In two or three places it was asked, "What are we to say to the deity?" They were told to say whatever they pleased, when the spokesman repeated the following formula. 'Do not be angry with us Goddess for giving you the blood of beasts instead of human blood but vent your wrath on that gentleman (Campbell) who is well able to bear it, we are guiltless'.

'It affords me heartfelt satisfaction to be able to report thus satisfactorily of the suppression. I will not presume to say of the complete suppression for that will depend on our future supervision and watchfulness of the meriah rite in Goomsoor, Boad, Chinna Kimedy, Jeypore, Kalahandy and Patna.'<sup>67</sup>

On the 24th of February, 1854, the Governor General granted leave to Col. Campbell to proceed to Europe once again for treatment. His work had been done and it was not necessary for him to come back again. On the departure of this valiant soldier, a native paper paid the following compliment: 'Col. Campbell reports the almost entire suppression of the practice of offering human victims, once as prevalent in Khondistan as in Carthage... The infected district stretches down the coast from the border of the Orissa mountains far into Madras, over a territory as large as Wales. The country, itself semi-independent, forms part of two Presidencies (Bengal and Madras), and it was not

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<sup>67</sup>*ibid*, 187/Vol. 59, Feb. 9, 1844,

till 1854 that the Government centralised their operations by the creation of a separate agency. The determination of the Government, maintained for half a generation, the incessant visits to the hills, have convinced the mountaineers that resistance is impossible. To sum up, in 18 years a crime worse than any known in Europe has been eradicated—twelve hundred and sixty human beings have been preserved from a horrible death—an entire people has been induced to forego a crime sanctioned alike by antiquity and by superstition. Col. Campbell has been concerned in these operations from the first. His firm gentleness has made them successful in the end. He has spent no small portion of a life away from civilisation.’<sup>68</sup>

On the departure of Col Campbell, the Government did not abolish the Agency forthwith, but thought it necessary to keep vigilance for some time more. Campbell was succeeded by MacVicar, who travelled in 1854-55 over the entire area. In Goomsoor he wrote, ‘All are in flourishing state, and there is already growing up a generation who have only a traditional knowledge of the meriah sacrifice’<sup>69</sup> At certain places like Pedda Kimedy where the tribes still ‘indirectly participated in the meriah rite by frequenting the scenes of immolation’ his operation was vigorous. The whole extensive territory of Chinna Kimedy, ‘the very pulse of Khond feeling, was searchingly examined’. All the sacrificing tribes of the Jeypore hills were thoroughly searched and Captain MacVicar had the satisfaction to see ‘with one exception only, the Khonds have remained true and steadfast to their pledge’. The exception occurred in the village of Asirghur, where a party of Khonds had subscribed 13 gunties for the purchase of a victim. A lad was stolen for this purpose by a Khond from the house of his father and given for sacrifice, but the rite was not consummated prior to Mr. MacNeill’s (assistant to MacVicar) arrival. He fortunately secured all the parties, and they are now undergoing the punishment due to their disobedience of the Sircar’s orders.’<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup>*The Friend of India*, September 28, 1854.

<sup>69</sup>*Reports of the Meriah Agents*, p. 60.

<sup>70</sup>*ibid*, p. 62.



In September 1855, Captain MacVicar left the Agency and was succeeded by his Assistant, Lt. MacNeill. Though the meriah rite in general was almost extinct, yet in the 'most remote and sequestered corners' of the country, some rare sacrifices yet took place in complete secrecy. Lt. MacNeill had to search out such unseen hill pockets and bring the criminals to task. Between 1855 and 1861, a little over a dozen victims were sacrificed where previously hundreds used to die before the operation. The secret perpetrators of the crime were mostly dealt with so that their victims might perhaps be the last in the list.

To satisfy the Khonds, the Government had previously asked them to immolate buffaloes with all the rites and ceremonies of the forbidden meriah. But the Hindu chiefs informed Lt. MacNeill that, 'if these ceremonies were allowed and no restriction made, the innate wish to revert to human sacrifice, which cannot be expected to be eradicated from the minds of the Khonds, would assuredly induce some of the most unruly to break their pledges, and the example once set would assuredly lead to many other sacrifices.'<sup>1</sup> Lt. MacNeill was himself aware of the 'imminent danger of secret and stealthy sacrifice of human beings by night, succeeded on the following morning by the immolation of the buffalo', since nine such secret sacrifices had 'occurred in the Goomsoor Khond tracts under similar circumstances in 1855, 1857 and 1858'.<sup>2</sup> He was also aware of the 'almost maddening results accruing from drinking liquor distilled from "Cuiri", used on the occasion of the buffalo sacrifice. After a careful consideration of all these facts, and remembering the Government instruction that 'the one grand point of cessation from human sacrifice being gained, the progress towards anything further should be most cautiously made', Lt. MacNeill prohibited in 1860 'the sacrifice of buffaloes on ground formerly reserved for human sacrifices, the use on such occasions of the liquor distilled from the grain called "Cuiri", and the exhibition of certain emblems formerly only used when celebrating meriah sacrifices.'<sup>3</sup>

Thus was wiped out the last trace of a barbarous rite and when the Agency was abolished in 1861, a dark chapter of history was closed for ever.

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<sup>1</sup> *ibid* p. 80,

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*.

# IMPLEMENTS OF NEOLITHIC TYPE FROM BONGARA-BHANGAT IN MANBHUM

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## *Introduction*

THE presence of implements of neolithic type such as celts, ring-stones etc., in the district of Manbhum in Bihar has already been reported by the author in a paper dealing with the microlithic industry of a site in that district which was read before the Anthropology and Archaeology Section of the Indian Science Congress at its session in Hyderabad, 1954. Later on that paper was published in *Man in India*, Vol. 34, No. 1. The celts, ring-stones, stone beads, other objects of stone, a coarse variety of pottery etc. which were collected in that area are being described here and a comparison made with similar objects from the adjoining district of Singhbhum.

## *The site*

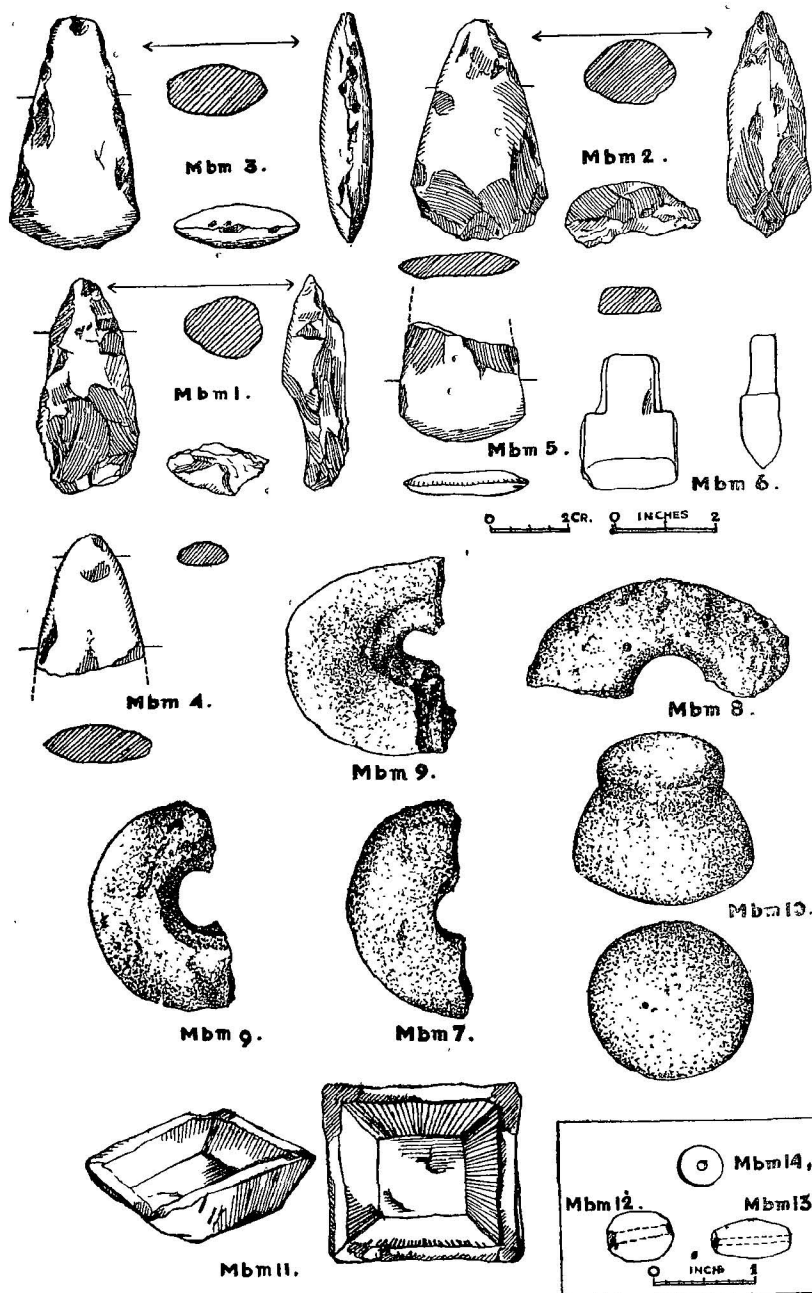
The area from which the above artefacts were collected practically overlaps the microlithic site referred to above and it is more extended than that microlithic site which is more or less restricted within a small portion of a valley locally known as Bongara (Ray, 1954). As the neolithic type of artefacts were collected from a wide part of the valley as well as from a near-by Bhumij settlement known as Bhangat, the industry has been named the industry of Bongara-Bhangat.\* From a preliminary study of the area as well as from the nature and occurrence of the artefacts, it seems that the site was a settlement site of the people who used those artefacts.

## *The artefacts*

The artefacts consist of stone celts of a few different types, broken ring-stones varying in shape, a stone dabber,

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\* The importance of this site near Jambira hills was first pointed out by Sri Surajit Chandra Sinha when he collected one celt, two ring-stones and some coarse potsberds from the same area. Vide *Science and Culture*, Vol. 17, October 1951, p. 164.



Artefacts from Manbhum

one small shallow stone trough, three perforated stone beads, a large quantity of potsherds and two terracotta dabbers. The following is the typological description of the objects. In describing them their museum numbers have been given.

**CELTS :** Although the total number of celts collected from this area is five yet they are varied in shape. One shouldered celt was collected from a local villager who secured it from his field and kept it as an object of curiosity. All are made of fine-grained igneous rock. Specific identification of the rocks has not yet been done. Typologically they are :

(1) *A chipped and slightly ground celt (Manbhum 1)*—It is greyish in colour and shows patination. Length, max. breadth and max. thickness are 10·9, 4·7 and 3·2 cm. respectively. The pole is somewhat pointed and the cutting edge is slightly convex and battered. One of the surfaces has a small ground portion in its upper half while the remaining portion is chipped. The other surface has an elongated ground portion in the middle with chipping round it. Both the surfaces are slightly convex from top to bottom and from side to side. The lateral margins are slightly convex and show signs of chipping. The battering in the cutting edge might have been due to use. The cross-section in the middle is somewhat bi-convex.

(2) *A ground celt with some chipping (Manbhum 2)*—Not patinated and light brown in colour. Length 11·4 cm., max. breadth 6·5 cm., and max. thickness 3·7 cm. The pole is slightly convex with an elliptical cross-section. The cutting edge is convex and chipped and somewhat battered. Perhaps a portion has been broken away. One of the surfaces which is more convex than the other has the major part ground. Near the cutting edge it is chipped. The other surface shows grinding towards its upper end as well as in a portion in the lower half. The slightly uneven concave surface of the lower half of the left side has been produced perhaps by breaking. The lateral margins gradually converge towards the pole, they are practically ground and rounded in nature. Though the cross-section in the middle is bi-convex, the curvature of one of the surfaces is more than that of the other.

(3) *An almost ground celt with a few marks of chipping (Manbhum 3)*—Practically ground all over excepting for a few chippings at the lateral margins. It is somewhat dark in colour with black spots all over the surface; also patinated. Length 11·9 cm., max. breadth 6·4 cm., max. thickness 2·7 cm. The two surfaces gradually slope towards the cutting edge and intersect in a sharp line. Pole is slightly broad and convex. Lateral margins are blunt showing a few marks of chipping. The tool is very uniform with respect to its longer axis. Cross-section near the pole is elliptical while near the middle it is bi-convex.

(4) *A broken ground celt (Manbhum 4)*—It is the broken upper half of a ground celt; the colour being darker than that of others and patinated. Length and breadth at the broken end, 5·4 cm. each. The surfaces are ground all over showing a few marks of chipping here and there. They are also slightly convex from side to side. The lateral margins are smooth, rounded, gradually tapering towards the pole. Pole is narrow, thin and round. The implement is comparatively thinner than the previous ones. Cross-section near the pole is elliptical.

(5) *A finely ground broken celt (Manbhum 5)*—It is the broken lower half of a finely ground celt showing patination all over. The colour is greyish. Length (broken), max. breadth 6·6 cm. and max. thickness 1·3 cm. The surfaces are almost flat, slightly sloping towards the edges. A few marks of chipping are present here and there, especially near the lateral margins. The two surfaces meet in a quite sharp convex cutting edge. The pole end is missing. The implement is much thinner than those described above. Cross-section at the broken end is bi-convex with a low degree of curvature.

(6) *A polished shouldered celt (Manbhum 6)*—Highly polished shouldered celt, deep brown in colour and without patination. Length 6·8 cm., max. breadth 4·7 cm., breadth at the pole end 3·1 cm., max. thickness 1·9 cm. The surfaces are smooth and flat except near the cutting edge where they slope towards the cutting edge. The cutting edge is straight

and formed by the intersection of the two surfaces. The lateral sides are flat and smooth and they curve in at the middle to form the shoulders, making the upper half narrower than the lower half. The pole end is flat, smooth and like a trapezium in shape, while the cross-section in the middle is rectangular.

**RING-STONES:** All the four ring-stones collected are broken. Their rock composition has not yet been determined.

(1) *Manbhum 9a*—It is brownish in colour with patches of gray. The surface is rounded and not smooth showing little grinding. Outer edge is broad and circular. The portion of the central hole which is present, is uniform throughout its length with little splaying at the two ends. Diameter of the outer edge is 9.3 cm. Maximum thickness is 4.1 cm. and the diameter of the central hole is about 3 cm.

(2) *Manbhum 7*—Slightly greenish in colour. The whole surface is ground, leaving a rough feeling to touch. The outer edge which is comparatively thinner than in the previous one is slightly rounded. The perforation in the middle is uniform throughout its length. The outer diameter is 11.1 cm., maximum thickness 3.6 cm. and the diameter of the perforation is 3 cm.

(3) *Manbhum 8*—Brownish in colour, surfaces are ground and rough. The outer edge is broad and circular. The surfaces are also rounded. Perforation in the middle shows slight splaying at the two ends. The diameter of the outer edge is slightly greater than 12.4 cm., thickness 4 cm., diameter of the perforation is about 4 cm.

(4) *Manbhum 9*—Brown in colour, less circular in outline and with much flatter surface than those described above. The outer edge is thick and rounded. The surfaces are ground. Perforation in the middle shows clear signs of splaying at both the ends, as a result the diameter of the perforation is not uniform, the minimum being at the centre. Outer diameter is 9.5 cm., maximum thickness 4 cm., minimum and the maximum diameters of the perforation are 1.7 cm. and 4.2 cm. respectively.

**OTHER STONE OBJECTS:** Of the other stone objects found,

excepting the beads described below, one is a potter's dabber (*Manbhum 10*) and another is a small square shallow trough (*Manbhum 11*). From the workmanship of these two objects it is clear that some sort of metal instrument was used to carve them. So the only proof of their antiquity (not as old as the celts) is that such objects are not in use now in the locality. Present-day potters of the locality use dabbers of the same type but made of terracotta. But stone dabbers of the type are still in use of many other places. The shallow trough was perhaps used as a stone lamp; the corners are slightly grooved and there are traces of soot. The size and shape of these two objects have been shown in the accompanying figure.

**PERFORATED STONE BEADS:** Three very small perforated stone beads were found. One (*Manbhum 12*) is more or less spherical in form, greenish in colour with a reddish tint. There is a fine perforation in the centre along its longer axis; the maximum diameter being 1.6 cm. The second one (*Manbhum 13*) is cylindrical in shape with a swelling in the middle, the colour being whitish. The two ends are flat and there is a fine perforation running from one end to the other, the length being 2 cm. The diameter at the two ends is about 6 mm., while the diameter in the middle is 1.1 cm. The third one (*Manbhum 14*) is of buff colour, thin and disc-shaped with a fine perforation in the middle. The diameter and the thickness are 1.2 cm. and 0.3 cm. respectively.

**POTTERY:** The terracotta objects which were found in tact are two conical objects (probably potter's dabber) with somewhat flat bases, while the rest are a large number of potsherds, very coarse in nature. The heights of the two objects like dabbers are 8.4 cm. and 7 cm. respectively. Their bases are 7.6 cm. and 5.1 cm. in diameter while the diameters near the apices are 2 cm. and 1.6 cm. respectively. The potsherds are very thick and coarse. They are of such a fragmentary nature that nothing can be said about the size and shape of the pots of which they form parts. It seems that at least a majority of them were hand-made and the clay was

mixed with chopped straw. The colour of these sherds seems to be blackish but requires further cleaning before anything can be said definitely. A large number of them were found in situ.

### Comparison

When we compare the celts of Manbhum with those found in the Sadar Subdivision of Singhbhum (Anderson, 1917 and Sen, 1950) and in the Dhalbhum Subdivision (Murray, 1950) we find that all the Manbhum celts have their prototypes in Singhbhum. As the Singhbhum collection comes from a large number of sites we naturally find some varieties in Singhbhum which are not represented in the present small Manbhum collection. But as we find that our Manbhum celts represent the major stages, beginning practically from a basal chipped to finer highly ground varieties, such as are represented in Singhbhum, we can assume that in future when the Manbhum collection increases in number it will also represent the other non-represented types. From Singhbhum shouldered celt have also been reported (Ball, 1880). The so-called terracotta potter's dabbers from Manbhum have got their exact counterparts in Singhbhum. On the basis of typology alone we can say that neolithic industries of the above three areas belong to the same culture.

Nothing can be said at present about the date of these objects of stone or pottery. Further, we do not know whether all these different objects, such as celts, beads, potsherds etc. are part of the same industry or not. But it has already been mentioned (Ray, 1954) that Bongara is a suitable place where trial excavations are likely to bring some facts to light which will throw light on the relation between the neolithic, microlithic and earliest tribal cultures of eastern India. But unfortunately the place is rapidly being brought under cultivation by the local villagers. It is for the Department of Archaeology, Government of India, to venture upon an expensive excavation of this kind and not the universities.

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# A MUNDA BIRTH

By LAL SINGH MUNDRI\*

*Ranchi*

## *Introduction*

**A** Munda village known as Katowa is situated two miles to the west of the Ranchi—Chaibasa Road on the southern bank of a small river called Phooljhari which divides the two districts of Ranchi and Singhbhum in Bihar. Juni Munda (aged 29), a schoolmaster of the Bandgaon L. P. School and his young and short-statured wife Dubki (22) live there happily. They were married with the usual Munda rites in 1952, and their first issue was born on 7 October 1953. We are presenting here a detailed description of the birth-rites as observed in this particular case. The details were collected during the ceremony itself.

## *Conception*

The period of one year after the marriage of Juni and Dubki passed smoothly and happily. Then on the fourth night of Phalgun (Jan.-Feb. 1954) Dubki said to her husband that she had missed her menstrual period. She was a little anxious on that account. Dubki had learned from the elderly women of her village Marungdih, that the stoppage of menstruation leads to conception. Juni began to experience a kind of imaginary pleasure which a man, yearning for a child, would feel in such moments. But neither Juni nor Dubki saw any dream in connection with the conception.

'The union between myself and my wife is the sole cause of the latter's conception', said Juni in a somewhat shame-faced manner, 'and we believe that Singbonga has no direct hand in it. This is evidenced by the fact that the unmarried belle who does not cohabit, does not conceive at all. But still we cannot totally ignore the grace of Singbonga (Sun Deity),

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\* The author whose mother tongue is Mundari and who took his M.A. degree in Anthropology at the Calcutta University presents an interesting report here.—*Editor*.

because some unfortunate couples who might not get his favour even die without issue. As to the question how many times men and women must unite before conception takes place, different persons have different views, but our view is that a single union between a husband and wife is sufficient. Both of us however believe that when we united, our semens mixed together inside the female organ of my wife and her present conception is the fruit of this.'

*Care and taboo of the expectant mother during pregnancy*,

'As the days began to roll by', Dubki said in a thoughtful mood, 'glimpses of hope and fear began to dance before my eyes. Though no taboo was imposed upon me against visiting markets or fairs, I did not like to do so, especially during the latter part of my pregnancy for I began to feel ashamed of my condition. There was no special food arranged for me; I took the normal food throughout. But I must confess that I do not know why I had a special fascination for tamarind and similar sour things which one is strictly prohibited from taking after the birth of a child. Rice-beer and medicine of any kind were tabooed to me in the belief that they might cause abortion. I am really very fortunate that I did not suffer from any kind of fever up to the end of the eighth month. Only after this month and before delivery, I often suffered from headache and pain in the abdomen and waist.'

Both Juni and Dubki were present when the latter was narrating her history and I came to know from the former that whatever his wife said was true. I then gathered from them other things which are detailed below.

'You know that I love my wife very much', Juni said frankly, 'and as such I always like to share her pain and pleasure equally. Whenever she suffered either from headache or pain of any kind, I used to approach the magicians (*Deonra*) of my village at dead of night even at the risk of my life. On such occasions, I used to put some sun-dried rice (*adewa chauli*) and occasionally placed two copper pice to be appropriated by the *Deonra* in a new *sal* leaf (*Sarjom*

*sakam*, *Shorea robusta*) and took it to the village Deonras, Reba and Jitray, for finding out by divination the spirits or black-magicians (*Bongako* or *Najom buriako*) responsible for the aforesaid troubles.'

Juni further told me that the two Deonras, Reba and Jitray, found by divination that the abdominal pain of Dubki was caused by the River-depth-spirit (*Garasi* or *Ikir-bonga*) who was asking for a red hen as sacrifice. 'To please this deity', Juni said with a smile, 'I sacrificed one red hen and my wife got cured.'

By means of divination, the two Deonras, Reba and Jitray, also came to know that the headache of Dubki was caused by the black-magician (*Dain* or *Najom buria*). 'There lives an old woman in our village who is a dexterous black-magician,' said Juni with some anger, 'but I will not disclose her name, because to disclose her name means to invite danger. She is responsible for all the *bans* (shooting of the magical arrows) of this village. She is really a very dangerous woman and all the people of the village are afraid of her.'

The two Deonras, Reba and Jitray, further divined that if three chickens red, black and white in colour were sacrificed, Dubki would be relieved of her headache. In fact there was no offering of actual fowl. It was at dead of night that Jitray Deonra prepared three images of fowl in clay to represent the three aforesaid chickens and two human images representing the supposed black-magician and her husband. He chanted many *mantras* or magical incantations inside the hut of Juni where Dubki was lying and then having taken these images in a cup made of *sal* leaves, Juni and Jitray Deonras went about a furlong from the village, when the latter again uttered some particular incantations and thrust the images into an ant-hill which was situated by the side of the path. When it was over, they came back home by following different paths. The reason why they did not return by the same track, was that in that case the spirits would not be able to pursue them. During the entire course of her pregnancy, Dubki suffered twice or thrice (actual number not remembered) from this pain and the aforesaid sacrifices were made whenever such occasion arose.

Dubki also off and on suffered from the waist-pain (*Mayang-hasu*) and her husband often consulted the two Deonrās, Reba and Jitray. Through their divination, they came to know that the cause of the trouble was this time the ancestral spirits (*Ora bongako* or *Haram horoko*). If a spotted chicken (with black, red and white colours) were sacrificed to them, Dubki would get well. But Juni was unwilling to make any sacrifice before seeing his wife cured, and so the two Deonras, Reba and Jitray, made the following conditional promise to the ancestral spirits: 'If Dubki gets cured soon, then the sacrifice would be made to them during week-end'. It is said that the ancestral spirits are very generous even though they sometimes cause some minor trouble to the members of their family, this is not with any bad intention but only to correct them from wrong-doing. This was one of the reasons why Juni did not like to make sacrifice to them without seeing his wife cured.

'Really it is a matter of great pleasure to me', said Juni, 'that my wife was relieved of her waist-pain within twenty-four hours, and my father sacrificed the promised chicken to the ancestral spirits during week-end. You may ask me why I did not do the sacrifice myself. The reason is that while my father is alive and in a position to perform the sacrifice, it would be improper for me to interfere. Moreover, he is an aged man and has gathered sufficient experience about such things.'

It was on Thursday morning when the mother of Juni applied cowdung diluted in water to her house for purification. After some time Juni and his father, Jado, came back home from their bath and having taken *gungu*-leaves (to be used for keeping the liver of the hen after sacrifice) and *sal*-leaves (for keeping vermilion and incense, etc.), knife, some sun-dried rice, fire in a piece of broken earthen tile and the spotted hen, went to their *ading*, which is the sacred residence of the ancestral spirits within the house, in order to make the sacrifice. By holding the hen and after lighting the incense, Jado addressed the ancestral spirits. He told them about his intention and after making the hen eat a little of the sun-dried rice, he sacrificed it there.

All the family members of Juni were allowed to take the meat except the liver and head of the hen which were eaten by Juni and his father only. The children and the female members are tabooed from taking part in the ceremony and so are the adult male members if they have not fasted before the sacrifice.

One day before delivery, Dubki once more suffered from abdominal pain and waist-pain, the causes of which were divined by the two Deonras, Reba and Jitray, to be the ancestral spirits once more. So the father of Juni performed the necessary sacrifice as on the previous occasion and Dubki got cured from these troubles.

### *Arrangements for delivery*

The condition of Dubki became gradually serious. Jado spoke about the case of his son's wife to Giri, his son-in-law in the Bandgaon bazaar. Giri accordingly came to Katowa on the day of Dubki's delivery. Juni, his parents, his brother-in-law, Giri, and the two Deonras, Reba and Jitray, who were present, all realized that the time for delivery was drawing near. Therefore Jado, the father of Juni, asked Giri, his son-in-law, to call a midwife, belonging to the Ghasi caste from Bandgaon which is about two miles from the village of Katowa. The midwife (name not known but popularly called 'Ghasi *buria*' or 'the old Ghasi woman') soon after receiving the call hastened to Katowa. Before she entered the house, the mother of Juni welcomed her by offering water in a brass vessel for washing her hands and feet ceremonially. She then took her seat by the side of Dubki who was restlessly lying on a mat by the side of the door. Simply by seeing and touching the body of Dubki, she could easily understand that it was a labour pain and she began to give her proper massage. While she was doing so, the midwife demanded from Juni one white hen which was to be offered by her to Singbonga. By touching the body of this parturient woman, the midwife believed that she had been polluted and if the necessary purificatory ceremony were not performed afterwards, Singbonga would be displeased and some misfortune might befall her. This was why she asked for the hen.

The sun almost came down to the horizon but the delivery of Dubki did not yet take place. She began to cry loudly as the pain became unbearable. The married women of the adjoining houses heard her cry and gathered together in Juni's house for any help which might be needed. Damda, the wife of Juni's younger brother Budhua, was the first woman to reach the place. She sat down close behind Dubki and after spreading her legs apart, she seated the latter between them. Now Dubki rested her back on the breast of Damda; and with a view to keeping the woman in proper position, the latter clasped her body somewhat tightly. Other women present there (among these Deugi took 'an active part) loosely held the hands and feet of Dubki. The male members waited outside the house.

Many hours passed by and everyone became more and more worried. The two Deonras, Reba and Jitray, were asked to find out who was responsible for the delay. By means of divination they discovered that the same black-magician (*Dain* or *Najom buria*) who had given Dubki trouble on previous occasions, was causing this delay too. The Deonras made the following clay-images to perform the *puja*: two human images (representing the supposed black-magician and her husband), one white hen and the other black (ceremonially to be offered to Singbonga and to the black-magician respectively). Though the supreme deity or Singbonga was not responsible for the trouble of Dubki, yet a clay image of a white hen was made and ceremonially offered to him for securing his help. Jitray Deonra abused the black-magician with very insulting and foul words, but the words used in connection with Singbonga were full of supplication and prayer. He and Juni then having taken the aforesaid images in a cup made of *sal* leaves along with the other necessary articles required in the worship (e.g., fire, incense and vermilion, etc.), went to an ant-hill which was situated at a distance of some quarter mile from the village of Katowa. It was then dead of night. After arriving at their destination, Jitray Deonra undressed himself and wore a torn piece of a broom-stick round his waist, He

uttered many *mantras* as before and after breaking the top of the ant-hill, thrust the clay images into it. Further he made water over this ant-hill in the belief that the spirits thrust inside it along with the clay images, would never come back again to disturb the suffering woman. Juni and Jitray Deonra then came back home by following a different route. When they arrived home they were very glad to see a new-born baby in the lap of the midwife.

### *Details of delivery*

Juni said that it was really a matter of shame for him to speak about the delivery of his wife; but when somebody wanted details, there was no harm in telling him the truth. He said that his wife was almost naked at the time of delivery when the pain was unbearable. There was no strict rule for the patient to face any particular direction at the time of delivery, and even if there be any, it was not possible for her to do so because by that time she lost consciousness. However Juni said that his wife gave birth to her child while she was facing the south. With a view to hastening the delivery, the women present asked Dubki to inhale forcefully which she did many times before it took place. And at last the babe's head came out and about ten minutes later the child was delivered. According to Juni, about one-fourth seer of blood was discharged along with the infant. Some 15 minutes later the placenta also was delivered. The midwife then asked Juni to bring an arrow to cut off the umbilical cord of the child. (I am told that in the case of a female issue a knife is used. The reason behind this difference is that the knife indicates female and the arrow a male.) After cutting off the umbilical cord she demanded four annas from Juni, who when asked the reason, could not throw any light on it. The midwife then tied up the umbilical cord of the babe with a fresh piece of cotton thread, washed it with Lux soap and tepid water, soaked its body with a piece of mill-made cloth, smeared *karanj* oil over the umbilical cord and laid it down on a cot (*parkom*).

The mother of Juni dug a pit with a spade inside the kitchen garden and buried the after-birth in it. Juni and

others believe that if the placenta is eaten by some animal like a dog, then some misfortune might befall the mother and the babe. For this reason, it is buried in the earth very carefully. In the meantime, the midwife dressed the mother and Damda came forward to help the latter. She held the right hand of Dubki and took her to the back of the house where a bucket of water was brought by the mother of Juni for washing. Dubki bathed her face and hands and her body from waist downwards with the water. She took off the *sari* which she was then wearing and put on a new one which her husband presented to her on the occasion. Having applied cowdung diluted in water on the spot where delivery had taken place, the midwife gathered all the cloths which Dubki had been wearing and went to a stream to wash them. Then she came back to the house of Juni. Jado served her with rice-beer which she took to her heart's content. The mother of Juni gave the midwife about one ounce of *karanj* oil and a little turmeric powder (to be used after the ceremonial bathing) and half a seer of rice (remuneration for her work), and she went back to Bandagaon.

### *Care of the new-born*

Juni was really sorry that the mother's milk could not be given to the new-born babe, for the milk of the first two days is not given. So he arranged for goat's milk for the babe even on the evening of child-birth. When Dubki's milk could be used after the two days, she first squeezed out the milk from her breasts. The reason why the first milk is thrown away is that it might cause harm to the baby. This she had learnt from her mother and other elderly women of the village. Dubki and her husband's mother were the only persons to look after the babe before the ceremony of purification. No male member of the family took it in his lap before the aforesaid ceremony was over. The reason, as Juni believes, is that men are not sufficiently careful in handling a new-born baby, and so for the first 6 or 7 days at least, they should not take the child in their lap. After a few days the child began to cry regularly. Juni consulted Jitray Deonra



as usual and came to know that the cause of the babe's cry was evil eyes. On the request of Juni, Jitray Deonra bit the abdomen of the new-born ceremonially and took out some unknown materials by means of his mouth. When it was done the babe stopped crying and they believed that he was cured.

### *Period of impurity*

The period of ceremonial impurity was observed by the family for seven days. It commenced on the date of the child-birth and ended when the purification ceremony called *chati* was performed. During this period all the members of Juni's family were regarded by the villagers as unclean (*mahali*). As such it was a taboo for the villagers to take food and water from the house. But the *mahali* family could take food and drink from others. In fact no villager even entered the house of Juni during this period and vice versa. I also came to know from Juni and others that if any one entered the *mahali* house by mistake, he or she could enter his or her house only after taking ceremonial bath after anointing their body with *karanj* oil mixed with turmeric.

### *Taboo observed by different members of the family during this period*

Dubki was not allowed to take boiled rice and pulse on the day of delivery. The only thing which she took was the soup of *kurthi* pulses. From the second day till the purificatory ceremony, her husband's mother gave her only boiled rice with salt to eat. Sometimes *puthi*-fish (*chirpi-hai*) were arranged for her as side dish. After the purificatory ceremony Dubki resumed her normal food, but for a further period of three weeks she was not allowed to take stale rice (*basi mandi*) and tamarind was tabooed for as long as six months. She was not allowed to go out anywhere before the ceremony. She had even to bathe herself with water at home. In fact, Dubki did not take a bath till the day of her *chati*. Plaiting date-palm mat and feeding her child were the two works which she did during this period. All other members of the family of Juni did not observe any taboo whatsoever.

The midwife every now and then used to come to Dubki to give her necessary massage. She also fomented the lower portion of the abdomen with the plaited castor leaves some eight or nine times. If this is not done, Juni told me, his wife's blood might become frozen and thereby cause harm.

On Friday, two days after birth, the mother of Juni fermented two seers of rice-beer (*illi*) which was to be taken by the members of her family and such other women who might accompany her son's wife (Dubki) to the bathing ghat on the day of purification. The Deonras and the other villagers would not take this rice-beer. For this reason, on the same day, the mother of Juni gave seven seers of paddy to Sombari, a middle-aged female neighbour, for fermenting rice-beer out of it for the aforesaid persons. She neither got any remuneration for this work nor any other material required to prepare rice-beer. She kept the pots containing rice-beer in her own house till the day of purification, when she brought and placed them in the courtyard of Juni. All the villagers participated in drinking this rice-beer.

Dubki watched for the falling of the umbilical cord of her son day in and day out. At last, on the seventh morning she found it had fallen on the cot where her child was lying. She showed it to her husband who in turn circulated the news to other members of the family. The villagers came to know about it through Jado, the father of Juni. The mother of Juni buried the detached umbilical cord of the new-born in the earth behind their house. Juni told me that if the grandmother of the babe is living, she is the best person to do so, otherwise any female member might do it.

One day before the falling of the babe's umbilical cord, Jado, the father of Juni, invited Karam Dayal Nanwa, the barber of Tupu-ingpiri, to come to Katowa and shave the villagers there on the occasion of the purification ceremony. As to the question how Jado came to know that the umbilical cord would be falling on that day, Juni replied that because his father had much experience, when he did not see the umbilical cord falling on the sixth day, he conjectured that it would surely fall on the next day, and it also happened so. Karam

Dayal Nanwa accordingly arrived at Katowa early in the following morning and so also the midwife. Juni is of opinion that there is no bar to shaving anybody first, but it is a convention that the new-born should be shaved first of all. In the present case, Karam Dayal first of all shaved the babe inside the house while it lay on in the lap of the midwife. All other persons were shaved in the courtyard of Juni. The reason as to why the babe was shaved inside the house, was to prevent the evil eyes of the bad persons. After shaving, the midwife bathed the babe in tepid water and fastened a cotton girdle on its waist. Besides rice-beer, the mother of Juni gave to Karam Dayal Nanwá, one seer of rice, half-a-seer of *urid*-pulses and four annas in cash as his remuneration. He also took some *karanj* oil and turmeric to be anointed ceremonially while taking bath on the way back to his village.

### *Purificatory ceremony (Chati)*

The news of the falling of the babe's umbilical cord, as stated above, was circulated by the father of Juni among the villagers early in the morning. He requested Sombari, Deugi, Kota, Kochang and Rutadih, the five married and aged important female members of the village, to accompany the wife of his son to the bathing ghat. All of them agreed to do so and assembled in Dubki's house in time. Now, the bathing party consisted of Dubki, the midwife and the aforesaid five women. While going to the bathing ghat, Sombari took *karanj* oil mixed with turmeric (*sasang-sunum*) and fire in a plaited straw (*bonr-se-nezel*), a torn piece of mat where Dubki used to lay down her child during the period of impurity was carried by the midwife. Dubki carried on her head a broken piece of an earthen pot and Rutadih carried the cloths of Dubki which were to be washed in the pond. The remaining women carried some of their own cloths for washing. Some fifty yards before they reached the pond or bathing ghat, Dubki threw down the piece of broken pot from her head in the middle of the path. Along with its falling down on the ground, all the women shouted together, '*Haribal*'. Then the midwife placed there the torn piece of mat on the left side of the

path and set it on fire. Then they went to the bathing ghat where all of them washed their cloth in water. Then they took their bath in the pond, after which they applied the *karanj* oil mixed with turmeric ceremonially on the body. Before leaving the pond, the participants asked Dubki to face the east while they faced west. Further, she was directed to join her hands together so as to enable her to receive water from Deugi, who offered her water six times. According to the advice of Deugi, Dubki threw away the aforesaid water thrice on the either side. But in so doing no word was uttered by anybody. When it was over, all the participants excluding Dubki changed their wet bathing clothes and came back to the house of Juni.

The mother of Juni washed with cold water the feet of the bathing party one by one on their return from the pond by way of welcome. Dubki's feet were washed first then those of others. And as a convention, Deugi, one of the members of this party, in return washed hers. They were still not purified so as to enable them to enter the house. So Jado gave them in a *sāl* leaf-cup the *illi-ranu* diluted in water. By means of a *dubla*-grass, they ceremonially sprinkled it over their bodies one by one and thus they were purified. Dubki was then wearing the same wet bathing cloth which she changed here on receiving a new *sari* from her father-in-law. The bathing party then entered the house.

It has been mentioned previously that the mother of Juni fermented two seers of rice-beer on the second day after the birth of the new-born for this occasion. This beer was taken by the bathing party and the members of the family of Juni immediately after the bath of purification. Jado, the father of Juni, prepared it by adding a quantity of cold water. Before doing so, he squeezed out of the pot, some rice-beer juice (*rasi*) and offered it to the ancestral spirits (*Haram-horoko* or *Ora-bongzko*) at the *ading* inside his house. While offering, he said, 'O, my respected ancestral spirits, I offer you all to take this rice-beer juice, so that you may not be displeased and put us in difficulty. Further, let the quantity of rice-beer increase so that we might be able to

enjoy it fully.' When it was done, Jado tasted a small portion of it and then distributed it among the bathing party (excluding Dubki) and the members of his own family. The mother of Juni entertained the above persons with boiled rice and *urid* pulses after their drinking. She cooked five seers of rice and one seer of *urid* pulse for this occasion.

When the bathing party returned from the ghat, all the male members who had come there and who had beards, got themselves shaved by Karam Dayal Nanwa. He also cut the hair of those male members who wanted to do so. The nails on hands and feet of both the adult male and female members were also pared by him. Almost all the children of the village had their heads shaved. Here ended the work of Karam Dayal Nanwa.

About half an hour after the completion of the shaving ceremony, Sambari whom the mother of Juni had given seven seers of paddy for fermenting rice-beer came and placed it in the courtyard of Juni. Jado first of all gave it for tasting to his father's sister's son, Nondo, who dropped a little bit of rice beer (*illi-e joro no tada*) on the ground as an offering to Singbonga and to the ancestral spirits in order to please them. If not done, they might be angry and might cause some harm either to the mother or the baby or any of the participants in that ceremony. He prayed that the quantity of rice-beer should never decrease so as to enable them to enjoy it throughout the night. Jado and Nondo then distributed it among all the members present, who took it to their heart's content and went on chatting and singing like birds which have just returned to their nest in the evening.

### *Name-giving ceremony*

From amongst the reeling gathering, the mother of Juni got up and said, 'Clansmen and women and Guests, now let us select the name of the new-born, by which he may henceforth be known. In my opinion his name should be kept after Monor, the ancestor of our family. His name is being forgotten and to keep it alive in our family, it is necessary

that we should give the new-born this name. But please do not take it otherwise, because it is my suggestion only and it is up to you to decide the matter. Now kindly allow me to sit down. All agreed to her proposal, but though Juni, the father of the new-born, did not oppose her in public, he was not satisfied with this name. He wanted to disclose his intention only on the following morning when everybody would become sober. The mother of Juni was then in a very happy mood and she hurriedly fetched *karanj* oil in a *sal* leaf-cup from her house and gave it to Dhon Singh, the son of her husband's father's sister, who first of all anointed the babe ceremonially on behalf of Monor (who could not do this job because he was dead) and then to himself. The *karanj* oil was then passed on to other members of the gathering who also ceremonially applied it to their bodies. At last this gathering requested Dhon Singh to wind up the ceremony. He agreed to do so and stood up and said, 'Brothers and Sisters, at the first instance, I must be thankful to you for giving me the opportunity of saluting this happy gathering. But at the same time, I do not understand why you have asked me to do so when other persons aged with experience are present here. However, let me see how far you may appreciate my little knowledge. We are assembled here to celebrate the *Chati* ceremony. But the question arises—whose *Chati* ceremony is this, and how we did we come to know about it? Listen! It is the *Chati* ceremony of the son of Dubki and Juni. We saw the hovering black clouds in the sky and we were sure that there would be rain; hence we are flocked together here. Juni Babu has entertained us with abundant drink. It matters little to us whether he borrowed or procured it by some other means, but we are all glad to take it to our heart's content. We should be thankful to him for this and at the same time, let us hope that Juni Babu would be giving us such opportunity to take rice-beer in near future. (All laughed but the murmuring sound disappeared soon.) And lastly we should not forget to call the new-born by the name of Monor. Let us all wish him every success in life.' After this speech, Dhon Singh saluted all the persons

present there one by one and others also did the same. That is to say, all of them reciprocally saluted one another and thus ended the *Chatī* ceremony.

As referred to above, Juni the father of the new-born was not satisfied with the name 'Monor' which was not selected by a magical process called *Tupū Nam*. He was no doubt present at the time when his mother proposed this name; but he did not like to oppose her because she was drunk and so were the others. He therefore kept silent, but determined to express his desire on the following morning when everybody would regain normal sense. Accordingly, Juni told his father, Jado, everything on the following morning. The latter agreed and he communicated the news to the other members of his family as well as to the elders of the village. Soon after receiving the news the latter flocked together in front of the house of Juni who kept ready cold water in a brass pot, (water brought from the surface spring or *dari* by Juni's mother on the same morning), a stem of *dubla* grass with one blade (brought by himself) and some sun-dried rice in a green *sal*-leaf. The assembly of the elderly persons then requested Nondo, one of the senior male members of the village, to perform the *Tup Nam* ceremony. He agreed to do so and after washing his face, hands and feet ceremonially with cold water sat down, facing the east, near the aforesaid materials arranged for this purpose. He first prayed to Singbonga to help him in selecting a suitable name for the baby and placed the stem of the *dubla* grass in the water kept in a brass pot. This grass all along remained floating on the surface of the water. Nondo further said, 'O Singbonga, I am dropping a rice grain in the pot in the name of Monor; let it and the *dubla* grass join one another, if of course, the proposed name is suitable for the new-born.' He dropped the rice grain which sank down into the bottom of the water and never floated up to contact the grass. Nondo raised his head and said, 'All of you see that the rice grain and the *dubla*-grass did not meet. This means that Singbonga is not pleased with this name. So let us discard it and choose another.' He then uttered the names of following person one by one :—

· Sura (Juni's father's father) ;  
Laka (Juni's wife's father's elder brother) ;  
Bando (Juni's wife's elder brother) ;  
Jado (Juni's father) ;  
Nondo (One of the senior members of the village) ;  
Jitray Deonra (Juni's father's elder brother's son).

But the *dubla* grass and the rice grain did not join one another. At last Nondo dropped a rice grain in the name of Jura (Juni's mother's younger brother). Now instead of sinking down like the previous rice grains, it began to float on the water and ultimately it reached and touched the *dubla* grass like a lover embracing his sweetheart after a long interval of parting. All saw this scene with their eyes and Nondo declared gladly that the new-born would henceforth be known as Jura and not Monor. The assembly dispersed after taking the remnant of the previous day's rice-beer.

Jura (Juni's mother's younger brother) was not present in the assembly. So it was Juni's duty to intimate to him the news that his son had been named after the latter. It was five days after that Juni gave the information to Jura. He also requested him to come to Katowa after seven days. Accordingly Jura came there with his friend, Sukhram Munda, on the appointed day and ceremonially applied *karanj* oil on the body of the baby. After this he and his friend also got themselves smeared with the same *karanj* oil. Dubki, the wife of Juni, served them with rice-beer and food and they returned home on the same day.

### *Resumption of normal duties by Dubki*

On the day of the *Chat*i ceremony, Dubki went to the surface spring (*dari*) with a view to taking bath and also for performing a ceremony. She took some sun-dried rice in a green *sal*-leaf and a small quantity of vermillion. Having taken her bath, she faced the east and took water in hands and said, 'O Singbcnga, I am really very grateful to you for saving my life from the dangers under which I was put some days ago. Further I pray you to keep me in good health and sound mind so that I might



enjoy the future in the same manner as I did in the past. And you, the spirits of the dales, streams, etc. I do request you all not to follow and disturb me again.' While so doing she took up water from the spring thrice in her hands and threw it away. Then Dubki, by applying her second <sup>o</sup>right finger, drew three longitudinally parallel lines with vermilion on the eastern edge of the spring and thrust the sun-dried rice and the remaining vermilion somewhere near that spot and came back home straight. Though Dubki had no strength on her body to undertake heavy work for a month or so, she gradually resumed her normal duties from this day. Thus ended the birth ceremony and the rites connected with it.

## BOOK REVIEWS

**The Distribution of the Human Blood Groups :** By A. E. Mourant, xxi + 438 pp., 42 s., Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford, England. 1954.

Since the publication of Professor W. C. Boyd's *Blood Groups* in 1939 students of human genetics and anthropology have been overwhelmed by the steady massive accumulation of blood group data. The blood group systems have increased from three to nine and blood group data are being published in almost every scientific journal. Blood group workers are also steadily increasing and in India some institutions are almost on the verge of replacing morphological anthropology by blood groups. Dr. Mourant's book at this juncture is therefore a welcome contribution and specially when one reads in his chapter on *An attempt at a synthesis* the following words :

'Morphological anthropology' is becoming accurately standardised and making increasing use of modern statistical methods : the blood groups and other genetically simple characters, as this book shows, being applied on a large scale to problems of human origins and classification.'

As an anthropologist, the reviewer hails this book essentially as a contribution in anthropology from the genetic point of view, though it is of no less value to the immunologist, to the biometrician, to the medical man and to the archaeologist. In the first six chapters, the various blood group antigens have been described from the technical point of view. Chapter seven describes other genetical characters of anthropological value while the next seven chapters deal with the geographical areas showing the variation and distribution of the different blood groups. There is a chapter on animal blood groups, while that on the blood grouping of bone and soft tissues has a particular relation to archaeology. The chapter on the collection, preservation and transport of blood samples will be of much interest to those who cannot afford the costly RH and MN sera. The method of gene frequency calculations has been dealt with in a separate chapter.

The data have been presented in a series of 40 tables. There is

an exhaustive and admirable bibliography, 9 maps showing the distribution of blood groups throughout the world and 3 classified indexes. The frequencies of the different genes have been given in a very useful manner, according to the approximate method developed by Dr. Mourant—only those who used the maximum likelihood method in their original papers have been incorporated as they were.

A word here is needed with reference to India and particularly for our recent colleagues in this field of enquiry in this country. Dr. Mourant has referred to the need of 'a thorough knowledge of the caste system' in extracting complete information out of the blood group data. This is definitely a valued opinion, but the recent trend in India among some foreign workers to disregard the caste barriers is extremely deplorable. Such workers will profit by a careful reading of Dr. Mourant's book in all its details. Dr. Mourant has produced an epoch-making book which will remain a landmark in anthropology. All anthropologists owe him a deep debt of gratitude for such a thorough and up-to-date work, which includes in it a large amount of unpublished data as well.

S. S. Sarkar

**Pleistocene Studies in the Malprava Basin.** By R. V. Joshi. *The Deccan College Research Institute and the Karnatak University Publication, No. 1, 1955. pp. 1-116. Illustrated. Price Rs. 15/-*

In the organization of palaeolithic research in India, a systematic mapping of the pleistocene formations and their dating in climatic terms is a *sine qua non* in prehistory. Since H. de Terra's pleistocene studies in north India, some useful work has also been done on the pleistocene in Gujarat, Mayurbhanj and Madras during the last 15 years. Regional studies in pleistocene geology and climate are essential in understanding palaeolithic environment and associated human cultures in India. Our knowledge is yet very scanty in this respect. The reviewer therefore welcomes Prof. Joshi's studies in the Malprava valley in the Bombay Karnatak region.

The book is conveniently divided into two parts : the first part deals with geology and environment and the second part deals with the palaeolithic cultures. A number of maps, sections, drawings and photographs have been given to illustrate the text. Those who

have actually worked in the field in pleistocene geology are aware of the difficulties involved in the reconstruction of environment, stratigraphy and the dating of Early Man and his cultures, especially in tropical regions far away from glaciated tracts and particularly where stream terraces and fossils are absent. The solution of the manifold problems would ultimately lie in climatic fluctuations which are not however so prominent as in glacial or periglacial tracts. Although very rich in human artefacts, the unfossiliferous river-deposits and the absence of terrace structures in the Malprava valley make exact dating of the culture difficult. Dr. Joshi has however measured the available field data carefully and scientifically and has not rushed to any hasty conclusion. The succession of river deposits in the Malprava basin reveals a climatic change but does not show *several* alternating damper and drier phases as observed by Zeuner in the Sabarmati valley, although a close parallelism has been noted between Karnatak and Gujarat. The author has studied a large number of cliff-sections on the river and has described the stratigraphy of the various deposits. The surface soils include black soils and red/dark brown soils. Underlying the top soil is a huge deposit of brown sand which is a very prominent deposit and is repeated in all sections. Below this deposit lies the implementiferous cemented gravel conglomerate. This is the only deposit which reveals artefacts. Underlying this is a sticky mottled clay which resembles the corresponding deposit of Gujarat. A number of the climatic phases characteristic of Gujarat, including laterite, are however absent in Karnatak.

The Malprava palaeolithic industry, according to the author, is a biface industry on core and flake, the latter being more predominant. Typologically, the industry is mainly Acheulian. The implements are classified into hand-axes, cleavers, choppers, scrapers, discoids and a few flakes. Among them, the hand-axe and the cleaver on flake predominate. The term cleaver-cum-burin (p. 59) is unhappy, since a cleaver and a burin are completely different and reveal different techniques of preparation. The presence of a flake-scar on one end does not necessarily constitute a burin. The reviewer is also intrigued by the description of the tool-specimen MNL 140 (p. 147) which is perhaps rightly identified as a hand-axe but which the author describes as 'probably a real burin or graver'. In a true burin or graver, the flake-scar truncates the

edge of the flake and appears as a facet. The technique involved is that of a vertical blow given at the point of the flake down the length of the specimen held vertically. There may be a number of graver facets. Angle burins have trimming on the other side of the working edge to the graver facet.

The author has written an interesting section (V) on comparative typology where he has drawn some useful comparisons between the tool types of Karnatak with those of other regions in India.

On the whole, the Malprava industry is typologically closely similar to the industries of Madras, Godavari and Gujarat and is only partially comparable to the Narmada and Mayurbhanj industries. The Malprava industry does not, according to the author, show any resemblance to the Soan industries. It is however not quite correct to say that the Soan culture is of the *Chopper-chopping* type. The peculiarity of the Soan culture is that it carries three lithic traits in integral associations—pebble-cores, pebble tools and flakes,—of which only the pebble tools generally are of the *chopper-chopping* type. The author has described and illustrated (fig. 37-39) a number of pebble choppers and scrapers from Malprava. He has however not described how these compare with the pebble choppers (and scrapers) of NW Punjab (Soan), Gujarat, Mayurbhanj and Madras.

The author has shown that close typological similarity exists between Malprava and Gujarat industries. It appears that on this basis he has, following Zeuner in Gujarat, dated the Malprava industry as 150–200,000 years B. P. (P. 47). Zeuner has described the Sabarmati industry as a combination of late Soan and Middle to late Acheulian elements whereas the Malprava industry, according to the author, does not reveal the presence of any Soan elements. It is on the basis of the occurrence of late Soan type in Gujarat industry that Zeuner has dated the latter as penultimate glaciation. Thus the absolute age of the Malprava industry as stated is very doubtful. On the other hand, the reviewer agrees with the writer that unless more field data are forthcoming from this and other adjacent regions, it would be premature to attempt exact geological or climatic dating.

The text on the whole is well-written and the treatment of the subject matter is scientific and systematic. The study of environment by the geological method is very commendable. We are grate-

ful to the author for having given us a competent study of a region of which we had previously no systematic knowledge. We wish that the author would pursue his researches further north along adjacent river valleys and throw more light on the probable climatic phases in western India.

D. Sen

**Studies in Indian Literary History.** By P. K. Gode, M. A., D. Litt. Published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1954. 2 volumes ; 546 and 543 pages.

The two volumes under review are being published as Vols. 4 and 5 of the Shri Bahadur Singhi Memorial Series. The author, Prof. P. K. Gode, has merited well of Indology. He has been curator of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute at Poona for over 30 years and we can only express the fervent wish that every research institute in India may have the good fortune to have a curator like Prof. Gode, or that every curator in India may profitably use his research opportunities to the extent that Prof. Gode has done. He has become the model of curators. The immense riches of our manuscript libraries remain to be made use of; Prof. Gode has shown us how to avail ourselves of these riches. His main preoccupation has been chronology, the backbone of historical research. The first volume contains articles on authors and their works till about 1300 A. D., the second volume covers the period 1200-1800 A.D. The introduction to the second volume brings the good news that Vol. III of Prof. Gode's studies in Indian Literary History is in the press. We fervently hope that ways and means will be found to publish in book form Prof. Gode's entire literary output. It is impossible in a short review to give an outline of the various contributions to Indian journals reprinted in the two volumes, but we can end by saying, without fear of contradiction, that no research scholar in the field of Indology can afford to ignore them.

C. Bulcke, s. j.

**Introduction to Philosophy.** By John Lewis. Published by Watts & Co., London, 1954. 236 pages.

After an introductory chapter entitled 'What is Philosophy?', the author gives a very summary view of the great philosophers

of the West, beginning with Plato and Aristotle and ending with Bertrand Russell and Whitehead. Many have been left out, but this is not the chief objection to the book. The introductory chapter does *not* tell us what philosophy is, and the rest of the book is *not* an introduction to philosophy, but a bird's-eye view of western philosophical thought. We agree with the author that a man's philosophy matters a good deal, and if one happens not to agree with the author's horror for the supernatural and his materialistic and anti-religious outlook, the book under review is bound to prove irritating. The author quotes Matthew's answer when he was accused of becoming as dogmatic as Carlyle: 'That may be true; but you overlook an obvious difference. I am dogmatic and right, and Carlyle is dogmatic and wrong.' I am convinced that the author is both dogmatic and wrong. It is difficult to make out in many places whether the author is giving the views of the system he is dealing with or his own. Because everywhere he brings in his materialistic and anti-religious opinions, even if they have little bearing on the history of philosophy. The Church comes in for a good deal of unphilosophical, because untrue, blame. How often has it been repeated that the Virgin Mother is not a female deity, according to Catholic belief. Anyhow the author graciously admits that the new Christianity (of the 4th century) has kept something of the teaching of Jesus!! His view on St. Augustine is equally distorted, and probably based on some isolated passages. In any case the doctrine of original sin does *not* originate from St. Augustine, nor did St. Augustine teach that man is 'indeed morally free, but free only to do evil' (cf. p. 50). It is difficult to see for whom the book is meant. Beginners will not understand the allusions, nor will they be able to follow the exposition; and those trained in philosophy will require a less summary and more objective treatment of the various systems.

C. Bulcke, S. J.

**L'ame du Riz.** By A. Maurice and G. M. Proux. *Extract of Bulletin de la Societe des Etudes Indochinoises.* Vol. 29, Nos. 2-3. 134 pages.

Anthropologists will be grateful to the joint authors of this study, which is written with so much sympathy for the people described therein. The small volume contains some 14 pages of illustrations and a map of Rhade country, in the interior of Indo-

China. The first part (17 pages) presents these loveable hill-people, giving details of their history and especially of their daily life. The second part (50 pages) describes their technique of rice-growing and the rites connected with it. The last part (22 pages) deals with their religion as far as it is related to agriculture. An appendix contains 34 pages of prayers in the original Rhade with a word for word translation. The prayers, again, refer to the growing and harvesting of paddy.

C. Bulcke, s. j.

**L'Inde Classique.** By L. Renou and J. Filliozat. Published by Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient, Hanoi, 1953. Vol. II, 758 pages.

The aim of this publication, which is to consist of three volumes, is to present a survey of Indian culture, as it is taught in western universities. The first volume, published by Payot (Paris, 1949), described the geographic milieu, the races and languages of India, the history up to the 7th century, and devoted the greater part of its pages to a study of the vedic and brahmanic religions. The second volume under review covers the philosophy and literature (in the broadest sense) of India, Buddhism and Jainism. It is rather striking that the six traditional *Darsanas* are treated very summarily. Vedanta, including Sankara, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Mādhva and Vallabha, is disposed of in 17 pages. No reason is given for this; there exist excellent monographs on all these systems and we can only express the hope that the exhaustive bibliography, which is promised for the last volume, will give some guidance. The next two chapters devoted to the scientific literature of India cover 110 pages whereas philosophy gets 84 pages only. The first of these, entitled *ERUDITION*, deals with Grammar, Lexicography, Metrics, Poetics, Dramaturgy, *Arthasastra* and *Kamasastra*. The second, entitled the *SCIENCES*, is one of the most original chapters of this volume, and deals with Medicine, Chemistry, Mathematics and Astronomy. The next chapter deals with classic Indian literature; Sanskrit literature is divided into three sections: poetry, narrative literature and drama. There follows a section on ancient non-religious Tamil literature from the pen of P. Meile. The chapter on Buddhism, covering close on to 300 pages, is divided into six sections: the sources, the life of Buddha, the history of Buddhism, doctrine, monastic discipline and Buddhistic cults. The first of these



sections is a model of erudition and covers archaeological, epigraphic and textual material, especially in India and China. The chapter on Jainism is divided into four sections : the sources, history, rites and customs, doctrines. Two of the appendices deserve special mention, both are from the pen of J. Filliozat. The first is a survey of Indian palaeography with 21 pages of comparative alphabets and numerals. The second deals with chronological notions and gives a complete list of all the eras used in India. Altogether a splendid volume : a monument of French scholarship, characterized by clarity and lucidity. We cannot help thinking of La Fontaine's fable and saying : 'Si votre plumage se rapportait a votre ramage, seriez le phenix...' If only the get-up were of the same standard as the contents, you would have reached perfection !

C. Bulcke, s. j.

**La Statuaire Khmère et son Evolution.** By Jean Boisselier. Published by Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient, Saigon, 1955. Two vols. in 8 vo. ; 322 pp. and 114 plates.

Many years ago Count de Croizier had stressed the originality of Khmer statuary. The two volumes under review corroborate his opinions. Mr. Jean Boisselier, conservateur of the Albert-Sarraut Museum at Phnom-Penh, has given us a full survey of the available material and studied it carefully. His results are as important as his analysis. The second volume consists of 114 plates with excellent reproductions ; the first volume too has well over 50 pages of illustrations and drawings.

The first part studies in detail the costumes and ornaments of the statues and ends with an analysis of their technique. The second part describes the characteristics of the various styles, their chronology and their relation to the art of India, Java, Champa, Siam, China, Ceylon, Burmah and the West. No reference library on Asiatic art can afford to miss these precious two volumes.

C. Bulcke, s. j.

**Inscriptions du Cambodge.** By G. Coedes. Vol. VI. Published by Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient, Paris, 1954. 337 pages.

This is the last volume of the Cambodian inscriptions edited and translated by G. Coedes. The inscriptions are given in chronological order ; the text of each inscription is preceded by a short description and followed by a translation. Numerous footnotes add further information or clarification. Historians and philologists (both Sanskrit and Khmer) will find much that is of interest to them.

C. Bulcke, s. j.

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